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THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

BY GEORGE GALLOWAY, D.PHIL., D.D.

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Ἐποίησέν τε ἐξ ἑνὸς πᾶν ἔθνος ἀνθρώπων κατοικεῖν ἐπὶ παντὸς προσώπου τῆς γῆς, ὁρίσας προστεταγμένους καιροὺς καὶ τὰς ὁροθεσίας τῆς κατοικίας αὐτῶν, ζητεῖν τὸν θεὸν εἰ ἄρα γε ψηλαφήσειαν αὐτὸν καὶ εὕροιεν, καί γε οὐ μακρὰν ἀπὸ ἑνὸς ἑκάστου ἡμῶν ὑπάρχοντα.

Acts xvii. 26, 27.

PREFACE.

THE volume of the "International Theological Library" on the *Philosophy of Religion* was originally undertaken by the late Professor Flint. Unfortunately the state of Dr. Flint's health prevented him from accomplishing any part of the work. At the request of the Editor of the Library—the late Professor C. A. Briggs, of New York—and the Publishers, the present writer agreed to take the place of his respected teacher.

The reader will find in the Introduction a statement of the method adopted in the book, and the reasons for adopting it. Throughout the work an attempt has been made to keep the facts and movements of religious experience in the foreground, and to discuss the problems of religious philosophy in the light of their historic development. And though this may have led sometimes to a certain amount of repetition, the course followed has the distinct advantage of bringing the philosophic theory of religion into closer relation with the life of the religious spirit.

In the matter of philosophical principles the author is in general sympathy with the movement called Personal Idealism; and he has learned much from writers like Lotze, Professor James Ward, and Professor Stout. At the same time, it is hard to resist the conclusion that even a monadistic type of idealism requires modifications, if it is to do justice to the realistic implications of ex-

perience. A speculative theory of religion, however, must be judged mainly by the fairness with which it interprets, and the adequacy with which it explains, the religious experience as a whole.

To meet the wants of those interested in the subject a Bibliography has been added, which, it is hoped, may prove useful.

For kind help in revising some of the proofs, thanks are due to the Rev. D. Frew, D.D., and the Rev. W. R. Henderson, B.D.

GEORGE GALLOWAY.

CASTLE-DOUGLAS, N.B.,
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THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION.

INTRODUCTION.

A.—THE GROWTH OF RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY.

PHILOSOPHY is reflexion on experience in order to apprehend its ultimate meaning. The philosophic spirit is relatively a late growth in the process of human development, and man is religious long before he philosophises. Plato and Aristotle have traced the birth of philosophy to the feeling of wonder which arises in the mind of man as he contemplates the moving spectacle of things. But even among primitive men the phenomena of nature evoked feelings of awe and wonder which stimulated them to religious acts. Such wonder, however, did not provoke men to philosophise. Only at a higher stage of development, when man has won for himself a certain independence and so enjoys leisure to reflect, does his wonder assume that intellectual cast which issues in philosophy. The philosopher steps on the scene after the social organisation has so perfected the material basis of life, that man is no longer daily anxious about the satisfaction of his bodily needs, and so has time and opportunity to speculate on himself and his surroundings. This truth Aristotle long ago fully realised.[1] A considerable progress in civilised life on the part of society, and in self-conscious activity on the part of its members, are the conditions which precede

[1] *Vid. Meta.* i. 2. p. 982*b*, 18.

the emergence of philosophy in the proper sense of the word. The instinctive way of explaining things, and the naïve attitude to nature and life, are already part of a distant past, ere man's developed powers of thinking lay on him the burden of self-conscious reflexion upon the meaning of his experience. Philosophy is the fruit of a society's maturer age, not of its youthful spring-time. Hegel has expressed this truth in a striking fashion: "As the thought of the world, it makes its first appearance at a time when the actual fact has consummated its process of formation, and is now fully matured. . . . The owl of Minerva does not start upon its flight till the evening twilight has begun to fall."

The philosophic spirit, then, when it enters upon its self-imposed task, finds its matter to hand. Questions are before it demanding an answer. The development of culture has organised experience in specific forms—in politics and art, in law and religion, for example. These have come to present problems to the mind which call for solution. What are the origin and the end, the meaning and the value of these characteristic forms of life? What part do they severally play in the larger drama of human experience? The case of religion especially invites philosophic thought. For religion is one of the earliest and most constant, one of the deepest and most engrossing forms of human activity, and in tendency and outlook it can claim a near kinship with philosophy. In its developed forms, religion seeks to present a view of the world and life which satisfies the spiritual and emotional needs of man; hence it deals with the same problem which exercises the mind of the speculative thinker. It does so, however, in a practical and spiritual interest, and not in a way that fully satisfies the demands of reflective thought. But a developed and living religion is sensitive to the claims of philosophic thinking, and, under favouring conditions, theology readily assumes a speculative form. Religious doctrines are purified and deepened, so that they approximate to philosophical conceptions and convey a

reflective view of the world as a whole. We have, in other words, a reflective movement growing up within a religion, and lifting the religious consciousness into the region of speculative thinking. This is not a Philosophy of Religion in the modern sense of the word, but it is the form in which religious philosophy first appears in the course of human history. I shall illustrate this by referring to Brahmanism and then to Christianity.

(1) The Indian Vedas reveal to us a stage of polytheistic religion where the forms of the gods, if no longer primitive, still retain traces of their original connexion with the powers and forces of nature. But as individualities these gods are not drawn in sharp outlines: they are shadowy creations, and one tends to blend with, or to be absorbed by another in the mind of the worshipper. This native bent towards unification was steadily fostered by reflexion, and became the basis on which philosophical thought slowly transformed the Vedic theology into a speculative system. Brahman and Atman, which in the Vedas mean respectively prayer and vital breath, were transmuted into universal cosmic principles: they were identified in the Upanishads, and made the all-embracing principle of life and existence. There is One being and no second: the gods of earlier religion gradually dissolve into floating appearances of the single and ever-present soul of things (Atman). Even the distinction of worshipper and worshipped, which seems so essential to the religious attitude, dwindles and fades, till the Hindu thinker, in the act of knowledge, recognised that he was one with the All, with Brahma. The very appearance of difference is explained away; it is the product of illusion (Maya). The end of the Vedas, as the Vedânta is termed, is a strict pantheism which proclaims the identity of man with the one and indivisible Being. Here then is a conspicuous illustration of a speculative process growing up within a historic religion, slowly transforming its earlier features, and at last restating the issues in the form of a thoroughgoing monistic philosophy. The result is not an arbitrary reconstruction upon a new

principle: it was reached by the exclusive development of certain tendencies which were present in the religion from the first.

(2) India supplies us with the earliest example of the beginnings and growth of a religious philosophy: a later illustration is found in Christianity. In the latter case, however, an important difference has to be noted. The speculative impulse did not proceed from within the Christian religion itself; it was due to its contact with an independent body of philosophical conceptions. The great religious movement which had its centre and origin in Christ was an ethical and spiritual movement; and the gospel when it was first preached was a way of life and not a theology. But in an active and expanding religion theological statement became necessary, and when Christianity passed into the Gentile world it encountered an atmosphere impregnated with philosophical ideas. To escape the influence of these ideas was hardly possible; and the biblical literature already shows traces of their working, notably so in the Johannine Gospel. This commerce with philosophy, which at first seemed a merely human wisdom and a "conceit of knowledge" to be avoided by Christians, was hastened by the rise of Gnosticism. The bold and fantastic constructions by which the Gnostics strove to explain Christianity as the centre of a great world-movement or cosmic process of redemption fascinated many, while they distorted the spirit of the gospel. That Gnosticism appealed to a need was clear from the attraction it exercised: the question lay to hand whether Christian thinkers could not respond to that need in a better way. A statement of Christian truth in a larger perspective was wanted, and the method, as it seemed, was to oppose to the false a true γνῶσις. Already in the second century, Justin Martyr proclaimed that Christianity was the true philosophy, and that all who lived in fellowship with the divine Word were Christians even before Christ. The influence of Platonic and Neo-Platonic ideas is very apparent in the Alexandrian Fathers.

To Clement of Alexandria and his disciple Origen it was a firm conviction, that the truths which were the object of faith (πίστις) could be made the object of philosophic knowledge (γνῶσις). In Origen especially we see Platonic and Neo-Platonic elements conspiring to elevate the doctrines of the Church into the form of a speculative theology. Through the doctrine of the Logos, Origen construes the Incarnation and explains revelation. With the Neo-Platonists he holds the nature of God to be incognisable in itself, and to be the subject of negative predicates only. God belongs to the region of eternal and immutable Being, and this region, after Plato, is contrasted sharply with the lower world of becoming and decay. So the creation of the world and the generation of the Son, Origen thinks, must be conceived as eternal processes, if we are not to draw down into this temporal and mutable world the changeless and transcendent Deity. A fusion of Neo-Platonic and Christian influences also meets us at a later date in Augustine. If we generalise the impressions derived from a study of this movement in the Church of the first three centuries, we may describe it as an endeavour to prove that the content of Christian faith can be made the object of knowledge. Under the shaping influence of Greek thought the philosophical theologians of the Church tried to reach a deeper ground for religious doctrines than authority pure and simple. They attempted to show that Christian doctrines are the expression of a rational and comprehensive order which thought is able to apprehend. Whatever value we may put on the work of the Hellenistic Fathers, we must at least recognise that, in the place and function they assigned to speculative insight, they were the pioneers of religious philosophy in the West.

Over the history of religious philosophy in the Middle Ages, and in modern times up to and including the work of Kant, I must pass rapidly. When we reach the nineteenth century the subject calls for fuller treatment.

The Middle Ages exhibit a remarkable development of reason on its purely formal side and a great dialectical

acuteness. But the old freedom of thinking has vanished, and philosophy, once the mistress of the mansion, has become the handmaid of theology which rules in her place. The inviolable truth of the dogmas of the Church is presupposed, and, while the thinker may explicate and justify them, he is not free to alter or discard them. That it was possible to attain a rational knowledge of the truth of the Dogma was at first generally assumed by the Scholastics, and under Aristotelian and Neo-Platonic inspiration they developed a speculative theology which was meant to elucidate the truth of the Church's dogmatic system. Yet, notwithstanding its dialectical subtlety, mediæval philosophy suffered from an incurable defect. It rested on a dualism which excluded fruitful interaction between the form and matter of thought, and it was therefore incapable of a real progress. A mobile form was confronted with an intractable matter. Whenever the truth of the Dogma was called in question, the elaborate constructions of the Schoolmen, like a building whose foundations have been undermined, gradually collapsed. This result was visibly foreshadowed in the last phase of Scholasticism: theologians had lost faith in the possibility of rationalising the Dogma, and now based its truth on authoritative revelation. Meanwhile, the difficulty of reconciling ecclesiastical doctrines and philosophical thought led to the theory of the "double truth." It was urged, with covert irony no doubt, that what was true in theology might be false in philosophy, and what was true in philosophy might be false in theology. Thought had now come to an *impasse*, and religious philosophy had ceased to be possible. Progress could only ensue when philosophy returned on its steps, revised the assumptions on which it had proceeded, and resumed its journey under fresh auspices. The Reformation signalised the beginning of this new movement which has given birth to Modern Philosophy.

Not immediately, however, nor even very soon, did the modern mind apply itself to work out a philosophy of

religion. Only the one religion was really before men's minds; and philosophy, delivered after a severe struggle from the tyranny of an imperious master, naturally turned first to other fields which had long been waiting to be cultivated. In the seventeenth century, with Leibniz, we have a really important attempt to bring philosophical principles to the solution of religious problems. In his *Theodicée*, Leibniz sets out from the theistic standpoint and tries to prove it is compatible with the present order of the world, an order which contains within it both natural and moral evil. The aim of the work, however, is not so much to unfold a philosophy of religion as to show that religious and philosophical conceptions harmonise, and that specific Christian doctrines can be philosophically justified. It is objected, for instance, that the goodness of God is inconsistent with the evil in the world. Here Leibniz reminds us we have not merely to consider what is possible, but what is "compossible." In other words, when we regard the limitations which elements within a whole impose on each other, he thinks he can show this is the best of all possible worlds, and that the evil in it is not inconsistent with its government by an allwise and righteous God. The arguments of the *Theodicée* are not always convincing, and in general Leibniz was over sanguine about the prospects of reconciling opposing principles and movements. At the same time his philosophical work is of outstanding interest and importance in its bearing on religion; for he insists throughout on the teleological character of experience, and on the reference of all monads to God, the Supreme Monad, who is the ground of the system of existences. The speculative theology of recent times owes much to fruitful suggestions thrown out by the profound and fertile mind of Leibniz.

But while Leibniz set himself with a keen insight to prove the harmony of faith and reason, it lay beyond the scope of his purpose to discuss the question whether the existing ecclesiastical religion did not contain non-essential

elements. This interesting question was raised and debated by the Deistic writers in England during a period that extended from the latter part of the seventeenth well into the eighteenth century. The criticism of the Deists was marked, no doubt, by the defect in historical insight which was common to the age. It was an unhistorical assumption that Christianity was the corruption of an original "natural religion," a corruption due to priestcraft. Just as unhistorical was it to suppose that this "natural religion," rational and ethical in its features, was the original religion of men. Indeed, "natural religion," with its well defined "notes," was as much a fiction as "the state of nature" of eighteenth-century theorists. Still this attempt to draw out the essentials of religion in general was in its way an anticipation of the task of a philosophy of religion. For the Philosophy of Religion has as part of its problem to distinguish the permanent from the accidental in religion, and to exhibit those constitutive principles which underlie all religions. But it was the purely rational side of religion which interested the Deists, and like their age they were ignorant of the forces which go to the making of religion. Hume, writing a little later, showed his remarkable acuteness by pointing out some of the real influences which go to develop the religious consciousness. He was one of the first to appreciate the significance of the psychological side of religion, and his *Natural History of Religion* contains many discerning remarks on the workings of feeling, sentiment, and reflexion in the growth of religion.

Kant's theory of religion suffers just as much as his ethical theory from his neglect of psychology. His *Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason*, in its spirit and outlook, remains true to the eighteenth-century tradition. His ideal is a rational and ethical religion, purged of alien elements, and emancipated from all that savours of intolerance and superstition. According to Kant the content of religion is just the performance of our moral duties conceived as commands of God. There is a certain severity

and simplicity in the Kantian conception, but it does no justice to the inner nature and motives of the religious consciousness. In truth, if Kant had grasped the idea of historic development, if he had realised the part played by religion in the life of culture, he would have found it impossible to reduce religion to an appendage of morality.

The rebirth of philosophy in Kant, and the change in temper and ideals which marked the transition to the nineteenth century, had the most important effects on religious conceptions. The narrow rationalism and the superficial acuteness which characterised the previous age, and appeared conspicuously in the criticism of religion, were gradually dissipated by a larger sympathy begotten of a new feeling for historic values. Men were beginning to realise that ideas and institutions, as well as society itself, must be regarded from the point of view of development if they were to be appreciated fairly. It need hardly be said that this modern attitude was favourable to the better understanding of religion, for it meant a broader way of looking at religious phenomena and a deeper insight into the motives and forces which were at work in the evolution of religion. As a symptom of the fresh spirit which was growing up, we may refer first to the work of Schleiermacher. His *Reden* (1799), delivered in the full flush of the Romantic movement, transports us into a spiritual world far removed from that of *Religion within the Limits of Mere Reason.* Recognising early the significance of feeling in religion, he never lost sight of it; and through all the changes of his keen and progressive mind, he continued to treat the feeling-experience as fundamental and religious doctrines as the outcome of reflexion on this experience. The Church or Christian society was the historic medium of this spiritual experience, and the Church's doctrines were the derivative ideas by which from time to time its inner life was defined and formulated. Religion is a continuous development, and it has not yet reached its final dogmatic form. Schleiermacher's interest in historic religion was centred in

Christianity, but in tracing the psychological origin of religion to the feeling of dependence, he tried to reach a universal principle which was constitutive of the religious consciousness. That principle he saw reflected with varying degrees of truth in the multiplicity of human religions. And while his direct contribution to the Philosophy of Religion was less important than Hegel's, he has a better appreciation of the psychological nature of religion.

The historical value of Hegel's Philosophy of Religion is not easily overrated; and this can be acknowledged by those who do not accept his principles or results. He was the first to draw out in large lines the task to which the religious philosopher must set himself, and to illustrate the comprehensive spirit in which he should strive to fulfil that task. A Philosophy of Religion, he shows, must include in its purview primitive religion, the ethnic religions, and Christianity: it has to make plain that all religions express the principle of the religious relationship and reveal in varying degrees the ideal of religion. Through the manifold forms of religion the Absolute Religion was in process of becoming, and was finally manifested in the fulness of the time. Hegel recognises that religion is a universal and necessary attitude of the human spirit, and his endeavour to show that all the historic religions are related as moments in a great developmental process was interesting and impressive. At that time, now nearly a century ago, the means for properly interpreting the primitive and the historic religions were meagre, and Hegel's generalisations are hasty and sometimes crude. Moreover, his theory of religious development as a dialectic process led to much arbitrariness in the construction put upon historical materials. But the value of his catholic outlook is not impaired by the questionable nature of some of his results. After Hegel there has been general agreement that a Philosophy of Religion must deal with religion as a universal phenomenon in human history, and a fact to be studied in its evolution. Nor has Hegel's conception of the function and method of a Philosophy

of Religion lost its significance. In religion, he held, we have ideas presented to us in the form of imaginative or figurative thinking, and philosophy has to purify this material in order to raise it to the speculative form of truth. As we look back on Hegel's work our faith in his dialectic may be feeble, and our confidence in the power of thought to solve all mysteries may not be great. Still beyond doubt the application of philosophy to religion does involve a criticism of ordinary religious ideas so as to bring them into consistent relations with the larger whole of knowledge. The shortcomings of Hegel's religious philosophy are well known. It is impossible to characterise the great national religions by any single epithet, however striking and suggestive. His psychology of religion is meagre and defective: the high importance of feeling is ignored, and the function of thought is much exaggerated. But from the historical point of view the stimulus which Hegel gave to the study of the whole subject was decisive, and this ought to be frankly recognised.

In following the growth of religious philosophy after Hegel, I can only try to indicate the broad movements with some of their characteristic representatives. The first, and in some ways the most important, of these movements was that mainly initiated by Hegel himself, and may be described as Absolute or Speculative Idealism. A common feature of this school of thought is a monistic idealism which treats nature and finite minds as differentiations of the all-inclusive Absolute. Yet in carrying out this principle there have been many divergences, and the interpretation of religion has varied greatly according as stress was laid on the unity of the Whole or on the reality of the differentiations within it. From Hegel's death in 1831 up to and beyond the middle of the century, the bearing of Speculative Idealism on religious problems was a subject of engrossing interest in Germany. But the movement found expression rather in Speculative Theology than in Philosophy of Religion in the proper sense of the term. Good illustrations of the work done

in this field are Vatke's *Die menschliche Freiheit*, and, at a later date, Biedermann's *Christliche Dogmatik*.[1] The latter work is a very thoughtful and able attempt to elevate the theology of the Church, conceived as a matter presented in the form of figurative thought, into the form of speculative truth. Though Biedermann in his epistemology came to stand on independent ground, the general principle of his treatise is Hegelian: and he is at one with Hegel in overlooking the importance of psychology and in magnifying the function of reason in religion. Nor does he abandon the conviction that Speculative Theology can reach the truth and express it in a final form.

The tendency seen in Biedermann to follow an inductive method in dealing with religious problems is much more pronounced in Pfleiderer, whose Philosophy of Religion claims to be developed on "a historical basis."[2] His contention is, that only a careful study of the developing religious consciousness, through the various forms which it has assumed, can enable us to rise to the conception of its real meaning. Pfleiderer's contribution to the fulfilment of this task is important and valuable. But while Pfleiderer follows the idealistic method of solving differences by referring them to a deeper unity when he is dealing with problems of development, his relation to Speculative Idealism is really one of considerable independence. He abandons any attempt to force historical material into *a priori* categories, and acknowledges the importance of the psychology of religion. He realises the significance of the feelings and the will in religion, and he recognises that the value-judgments of spiritual experience must play a part in giving content to the idea of God. Nor does he contend that our reason can penetrate all things and evolve truth in an absolutely final form. It is in keeping with these reservations that Pfleiderer adopts an epistemology of a realistic type, and this enables him to reject the pantheism into which Hegelian idealism

[1] 1st ed., Zurich, 1869; 2nd ed., revised, in 1884.

[2] 2nd ed. 1884, Eng. tr. 1886; 3rd ed., revised and reconstructed, 1896.

naturally drifts. At the same time the question arises, whether these gradual modifications of an original standpoint should not, in the interests of consistency, have carried him further than he has gone in the direction of some form of personal idealism. Be this as it may, Pfleiderer's luminous and suggestive treatment of the mass of historical materials which confront the religious philosopher constitutes a weighty contribution to the subject.

As also representing Speculative Idealism in Germany, it may be enough to refer to the works of E. von Hartmann and A. Dorner. In von Hartmann the influence of Schopenhauer blends with that of Hegel and gives a pessimistic colour to his philosophy of religion. But he by no means neglects the study of the development of religion, and he has a just appreciation of the relative values of the psychical elements in the religious consciousness. The curious thing is that the writer, despite his study of the psychological facts, should conclude that religious ideas and values are determined by the unconscious life, of whose deeper movement consciousness is the surface manifestation. At the same time, Hartmann's theory of an unconscious Absolute helps him to overcome a difficulty which Speculative Idealists had not frankly faced, the difficulty, namely, how a self-conscious Absolute could embrace personal selves as elements in its own being. According to the "Concrete Monism of the Unconscious," the Absolute only becomes conscious through its specific determinations in finite minds: religion is really a process in which the Deity works out his own redemption by gradually returning to the Unconscious from the consciously felt ills of the world. Von Hartmann's conception of religion is interesting, for it represents the issue of an attempt to think out consistently the implications of an idealistic Monism. How far it does justice to the facts of the religious consciousness is, of course, another matter.[1]

[1] The reader who has not time to go through Hartmann's larger works on religion will find a clear and compact statement of his views in his *Grundriss der Religionsphilosophie*, 1909.

Along with Hartmann may be mentioned A. Dorner, whose Philosophy of Religion is also conceived in the spirit of Speculative Idealism without being subversive in its conclusions.[1] Dorner is influenced by Schelling as much as by Hegel, and he retains the old confidence in the power of reason to construct a metaphysics of the Divine Nature. In keeping, too, with the older method is his endeavour to define the ideal of religion, and to develop a metaphysical theory of the Absolute, before treating religion historically and psychologically. In the Divine Nature, Dorner distinguishes ideal and real aspects which correspond to the reason and will in man. The world, as he conceives it, is a developing system of potencies, "planted out" and sustained by God, and it advances by a growing preponderance of the ideal over the real element till it comes to its goal in self-consciousness. With Dorner, as with Pfleiderer, Speculative Idealism is modified by a realistic theory of knowledge; and by this means he avoids the conclusion of thoroughgoing monism, that there is only one real Being.

Our account of the interpretation of religion at the hands of Speculative Idealists would be incomplete without some reference to the contributions of Neo-Hegelian writers in Great Britain and America. It may suffice to mention here the *Introduction to the Philosophy of Religion* by Principal Caird; Dr. Edward Caird's *Evolution of Religion*; Professor Watson's *Philosophical Basis of Religion*;[2] and the Gifford Lectures of Professor Royce, of Harvard, on *The World and the Individual.* The first three works are closely related in spirit and standpoint, while the last is written from a more independent position. As compared with earlier idealists of the same school, these writers allow more for the working of the psychical elements other than thought; they recognise the need of rising to the speculative interpretation of religion through

[1] *Grundriss der Religionsphilosophie*, 1903.

[2] Prof. Watson has recently given a fuller statement of his views in his Gifford Lectures on *The Interpretation of Religious Experience.*

a study of its concrete manifestations; and the stereotyped method of the dialectic is not obtruded. But it would be too much to say that the importance of the Psychology of Religion is fully realised, or that metaphysical principles do not unduly determine the treatment of historical materials. And all these authors are at one in this respect, that they find the ultimate explanation of religion in an idealistic monism which identifies God with the Absolute. It is, for instance, a feature of that very suggestive book, *The Evolution of Religion*, that differences are constantly resolved into a more fundamental unity which is supposed to explain them. The ultimate unity, or final synthesis, is an Absolute Mind which, in the process of returning on itself from its differentiations in nature and finite spirits, explains why the religious consciousness in time advances from an imperfect to a fully adequate form.

A far-reaching idealism of this kind will always have a fascination for some minds, while others find it beset with insuperable difficulties. Neither the individual nor the personal aspects of experience, it is urged, can be accounted for in a system which reduces the contrast of the divine and human to a shadowy difference of degree. If justice is to be done by an idealistic philosophy to these personal elements, the principles on which it proceeds ought to undergo serious modification. The feeling that the personal values of life must be conserved lay behind the movement of thought which may be broadly termed Personal Idealism. The beginnings of this tendency can be traced to the work of Lotze (1817–81), though he cannot himself, without qualification, be called a personal idealist. His writings, however, are a sustained protest against the formalism which finds the core of reality in the form of thought, and discovers the secret of development in the play of a dialectic movement. In sharp contrast, Lotze emphasises the individual and personal sides of experience: in harmony with this he holds, that our ethical and religious

value-judgments must help to determine our idea of God as ultimate Ground of reality. Lotze discovers the path to the deeper nature of things in what "ought to be" rather than in what is. This strongly marked ethical element in his thinking, and his claim that personal spirits have an independence of their own, would seem to indicate that Lotze is in sympathy with idealism of the personal type. In his ultimate metaphysical synthesis, however, he falls back on an all-embracing monism, and apparently reduces finite selves to elements within the life of the one real Being. The ethical and metaphysical sides of Lotze's thought are not coherent: his ethical postulates require more than his metaphysical principles can concede. But there can be no doubt that, in one aspect of his philosophy, Lotze clearly points to a theistic view of the universe which does justice to personal values.

The writings of Rudolf Eucken and Hermann Siebeck must also be cited as supporting a personal or theological type of idealism. Eucken lays the greatest stress on the independence of the spiritual life, a life which breaks with the merely natural and sensuous existence and wins for itself a higher content.[1] His system is a persistent protest against the tendency of naturalism and pantheism to treat personality as an outgrowth or a part of nature. Man is a spiritual personality whose life is rooted in an eternal and transcendent life; to become the organ of this renewing and transforming life is the spiritual vocation of man and the true form of his self-activity. Eucken lays much weight on the fact that the entrance into this life of the spirit is not a simple and natural development: it means a reversal of the lower order of existence, a process of "conversion," to use the language of theology. He accentuates the immediacy, the freedom and the self-activity of this personal life in man, and it would be inconsistent for him to regard the Eternal and Divine Life

[1] Eucken's philosophy has a markedly religious colouring throughout: hence it has been termed a "theological idealism." His most direct treatment of religion is his *Wahrheitsgehalt der Religion*. Eng. tr. 1911.

as impersonal Man, we are told, meets the Divine in the depth of his being, and by dependence on and union with God he overcomes the world. The precise relation of the divine and human is obscure in Eucken's philosophy, and on this ultimate question he takes refuge in a mysticism which evades clear thinking. But his system in its spirit and aim is a personal idealism; and if monism is its goal, the goal can only be reached as the consummation of personal endeavour. In his personalism, and in his way of regarding the temporal and historic life, Siebeck is in close sympathy with Eucken.[1] These thinkers unite in conceiving this earthly form of existence to be directly grounded in an eternal and supramundane Reality, and both argue that only from this point of view can historic development receive a satisfying meaning and value. But Siebeck is less a man of one idea, and he pays much more attention to the historic phases and the psychological elements of the religious consciousness. In particular, he connects the notion of personality in a lucid and convincing way with the process of historic development. Human personality is the crown of world-evolution; and the developed personal self, a union of logical thinking and ethical value, has its ground and explanation in a Reality which is final Cause and supreme Good. There is interaction between the human and the divine, not identification; the spirit of religion, in virtue of which man transcends this world to find his goal in a higher world, is the outcome of the working of the Divine Spirit. The theistic idea stands out more sharply in Siebeck than in Eucken, and he has made a valuable contribution to the Philosophy of Religion.

In British thought Idealism of the personal type is also at work, though it has not yet had time to come to a full and systematic expression of itself. Here, as in Germany, this form of idealism arose out of a reaction against the older form. The failure of Absolute Idealism to do justice to the facts and interests of the personal

[1] *Vid.* his *Lehrbuch der Religionsphilosophie*, 1893.

life was emphasised a good many years ago by Professor Pringle-Pattison, though little was attempted in the way of reconstruction.[1] More recently Dr. Hastings Rashdall has spoken in the same sense, and with an eye on the religious problem.[2] Especially relevant in this connexion is Dr. Rashdall's insistence, that while finite spirits are dependent on God, neither they nor their experiences are God. God, then, is limited by the presence of minds which are other than Himself; and though all experiences are experiences of minds, God is not the all-inclusive whole of experience. The Absolute, if we use the term, can apply only to the whole system: God and the Absolute are not identical. If we are to choose between terms, the Deity is better described as finite than infinite. No doubt this line of thought presents difficulties, but on the whole it is better fitted to do justice to religious experience than the theory against which it is a reaction. A complete Philosophy of Religion is, however, a task which Personal Idealists in this country have not hitherto undertaken. The reason probably is, that the system requires much fuller statement and development on its philosophical side than it has yet received.

Alongside the two movements we have been describing, there has been a third movement which offers a contrast to both in its character and aims. This movement might be designated—a little vaguely, perhaps, yet not inaccurately—empirical. Those who represent it, when they admit the possibility of a speculative interpretation of religion, do so under reserve and with qualifications. If they concede the importance of psychology and epistemology in treating religious problems, they reject the idea of a metaphysics of the Absolute as a vain and barren enterprise. This school lays stress, not on speculative theory, but on the historic facts of religion and the actual working of the religious consciousness

[1] In his *Hegelianism and Personality*, 1887.

[2] *Vid.* his *Philosophy and Religion*, 1909; also his essays in the volumes entitled, *Personal Idealism* and *Contentio Veritatis*.

In Germany this empirical tendency asserted itself in the first instance by way of protest on the part of theology against the exaggerated claims of Speculative Idealism. The movement, as we see it in Ritschl and his followers, was in substance an attempt to banish metaphysics from religion, and to base theology on the facts of historic revelation and the truths of spiritual experience. The nature of the Christian spirit is not reached by means of a philosophical theory, but by examining its actual working and making clear what is implied in that. Those who follow this method find that metaphysical considerations are remote from the essence of the Christian religion, which is really a system of values historically grounded. The religious consciousness moves in the domain of judgments of value: it eschews the mechanical methods and causal explanations of natural science, and regards things teleologically. In other words, the religious mind looks away from the world of causal facts to a realm of ends and ideals, and organises its experience in a series of values which lead up to a Supreme Value. Hence the truth of the Christian religion is not guaranteed by philosophical reflexion: its certainty is practical and historic, and rests on the way its values work and have worked in human lives. The sharp severance of the scientific and religious methods is characteristic of Ritschl and his followers, and closes the door to any attempt to reconcile them from a higher standpoint. A similar hard and fast separation between science and religion was drawn by the late Auguste Sabatier in his Philosophy of Religion.[1] While recognising the function of a theory of religious knowledge, M. Sabatier casts doubt on a speculative interpretation of religion. For religion, he maintains, is an affair of the heart, not of the reason, and is perpetually born of the living needs of the human spirit. The soul, hampered and oppressed by the limitations of its material environment, is driven to seek deliverance by an act of faith, and through faith it wins the good it seeks. The man destitute

[1] *Esquisse d'une Philosophie de la Religion*, 3rd ed. 1897.

of the inner religion of the spirit is not convinced by reasons in its favour, while the man who has spiritual religion finds these reasons superfluous. In the hands of Sabatier a theory of religious knowledge is an instrument with which to purge theology from uncritical and irrelevant accretions; and it teaches us to refine theological dogmas into spiritual symbols. But it is not a stage on the way to a rational comprehension of the ultimate meaning of religion.

A like refusal to go beyond the limits of an epistemological theory in dealing with religion is made by Höffding.[1] While Höffding's inclination is towards what he calls a "critical monism," he thinks that the ultimate ground of thought and things transcends our knowledge: we can only use figures and analogies in regard to it, and these cannot be strictly true. The idea of construing religion through a philosophical theory of the ultimate nature of God and man is silently discarded by Höffding, and he tries instead to determine its significance and value as a developing factor in human culture. The interpretation which he gives to religion puts weight on its functional character in human evolution: it is a way of regarding the world and life which subserves the cause of ethical progress. Science has confidence to pursue its enterprise, for it postulates a continuity between the elements of experience which is the condition of understanding them; the scientific man is guided in his research by the conviction that no energy in the universe is lost but is conserved through all its transformations; and the religious man, too, has his helpful postulate—faith, namely, in the continuity of value in the world-process. The postulate of religion as well as the essence of the religious consciousness, according to Höffding, is a faith that the value or good in the world maintains itself amid all fluctuations. Such a conception of religion gives no scope for reverence or love; at most it admits of a vague elation that the good of the world persists unbroken amid the shocks and

[1] *Religionsphilosophie*, 1901. Eng. tr. 1906.

accidents of time. For the truth of religion lies in a functional attitude rather than in a relation to a supra-mundane Object; it is faith, not so much in a value as in the behaviour of values in the world-process. And I presume we are to conclude that such a faith is useful and an inspiration to successful endeavour. Höffding's *Religionsphilosophie* is a bold and, in some ways, a striking attempt to show that religion may be properly understood as a specific mode in which man relates himself to mundane experience and which is helpful to social development. The difficulty of course is, that, under the conditions stated, faith would lack any sure and steadfast ground for the validity of its postulate. It is hard to see how the universe can guarantee either its own stability, or the conservation of the values which exist within it.

In general sympathy with the empirical treatment of religion is the Pragmatist School of thinkers, which at present is a distinct feature in British and American philosophy. The pragmatic doctrine that truths are values, when applied to religion brings Pragmatists into close contact with Ritschlians. The former as well as the latter put forward the test of "working-value" in order to distinguish the living from the dead elements in the theology of the Churches. The pragmatic principle of working-value is, however, sufficiently elastic to permit of considerable diversity in the manner of elaborating a religious philosophy. For example, by taking the word "practical" in a narrower or a wider sense, a pragmatist might reject or accept the help of metaphysics in dealing with the problem of religion. And the exact form and scope of a Philosophy of Religion after an orthodox pragmatic type is not yet quite clear. If we may trust the late Professor James, in his volume on *Varieties of Religious Experience*, Scholastic Theology and the Metaphysics of the Divine Attributes do not enter into the practical religious life: they are therefore useless, and so untrue. The tendency of Pragmatism is, no doubt, to deal with religion by an empirical method, the method which

seeks to exhibit the implications of those values at work in the actual religious life of men. A speculative conception of God, for instance, which could not be related in a vital way to the needs and purposes of religious conduct would fail to commend itself to Pragmatists. "On pragmatistic principles, if the hypothesis of God works satisfactorily in the widest sense of the word, it is true. Now whatever its residual difficulties may be, experience shows that it certainly does work, and that the problem is to build it out and determine it so that it will combine satisfactorily with all the other working truths."[1] The ultimate test, therefore, is empirical, what works in experience.

The three broad movements of thought here rapidly sketched embody the main tendencies which at present are active in the sphere of religious philosophy. No one of them can be said to be dominant. Minor movements, ethical or mystical, I have had to pass over in this short survey. But perhaps it ought to be mentioned that an attempt has been made in quite recent times—and it may grow in importance—to treat religion on purely sociological lines. The ancestor of this way of thinking was no doubt Comte; but it has a certain affinity with the empirical method we have been discussing, although its results are more subversive of traditional conceptions. Thinkers of this school often make much of the biological analogy, society being treated as an organism and religion as one of its functional developments. The common note of works of this type is, that they eliminate entirely the transcendent aspect of religion, and construe it as an ethical activity directed to social good. This is the standpoint of writers like Paul Natorp in Germany and Stanton Coit in England. In France similar ideas received outspoken expression in the well-known book of Guyau, *L'Irréligion de l'Avenir*. According to Guyau, religion is a kind of explanation, cast in a mythical and symbolic form, of all things after the analogy of human society.

[1] *Pragmatism*, by William James, p. 299.

Instead of the older conception of Deity, the non-religious man of the future will rather admire the Cosmos and its forces on the one hand, and devote himself to the social ideal on the other.[1]

This brief outline of the growth of religious philosophy will show that the confidence in speculative thought, which marked the first half of the Nineteenth Century, has not been maintained to its close. We rather witness a growing disinclination to magnify reason, and a tendency to doubt the possibility of final solutions. Even those who trace their intellectual lineage to the "kings of thought" are content to rule over a more modest domain. Hence greater attention has been paid to the facts of religious experience, and to the mode of its working in the individual and the race. The result has been that, if religious philosophers do not put forward ultimate explanations with the old confidence, they have gained a firmer grasp of the nature of religion as a psychological and social phenomenon. Of last century it has been said: "No age has been so rich in rival theories, so subversive of old ideas, so destructive of principles which stood firm for many ages."[2] This is particularly true in the sphere of religion. As the outcome of this ferment we have diverging types of religious thought, but no one dominant theory of religion. The religious philosopher in the new century has the advantage of a larger and better sifted body of materials than his predecessor in any former time. He is thereby spared from falling into errors into which earlier labourers in the same great field fell, and for which they could hardly be blamed. But the task of a constructive philosophy of religion has in some ways become more difficult. For the abundance of materials has increased the complexity of the problem, and made it harder to reach a synthesis which does justice to all the elements.

[1] *Vid.* the Introduction of *L'Irréligion de l'Avenir.*

[2] Merz, *History of European Thought in the Nineteenth Century*, vol. i. p. 80.

B.—PROBLEM AND METHOD.

The foregoing survey will help to show how the problem of a Philosophy of Religion has gradually defined itself as the outcome of recent thought. It is the problem of the final meaning of religion as a constituent element in human life and development. With the decline of faith in the older dogmatic and authoritative methods of treating religion, the study has steadily grown in importance, and justly claims the attention of all reflecting people who are interested in religion. But the task to be achieved is not a simple one, and it involves the combination of several independent sciences or disciplines in the service of a central end. And while it is necessary to distinguish results which belong to one subordinate province from those of another, the boundary lines are not always easy to draw. The Psychology of Religion, for instance, readily passes into the Metaphysics of Religion, and a question of genesis into a question of ultimate nature. It will make our way clearer if we explain at the outset what exactly is meant by philosophy and what by religion.

Philosophy has been defined as the thinking view of the world, and the definition is true so far as it goes. But it stands in need of some amplification in order to bring out the specific character of philosophical thought. The object of philosophy is experience in all its variety and fulness, not any single aspect of experience. Its aim is to show by reflective thought the ultimate principles which give continuity, meaning, and value to this complex whole of experience. Its purpose is unification, its ideal the organisation of experience in a fully articulated system. Some thinkers have distinguished and sharply contrasted the method of philosophy with that of the special sciences. But I do not think philosophy can make good a claim to possess higher methods peculiar to itself. The task of the scientist as well as the philosopher is to explain, to establish continuity and rationality in the matter which is given.

Now it can hardly be maintained that the philosopher's way of explaining is different in kind from that, for instance, of the physicist or the biologist. In each case the search is for connecting and unifying principles. The difference is not one of method, but of standpoint. The standpoint of the man of science is restricted: in setting to work he neglects a great deal because it is not relevant to his purpose, and concentrates his mind on a certain aspect of reality. If he is investigating the laws of falling bodies, he does not inquire into the cause of gravity or the chemical constitution of material objects. Hence his explanations are provisional: they rest on an act of abstraction, on a partial study of the facts; and they are valid only within the given sphere and for a specific purpose. Philosophy, on the other hand, endeavours to reach ultimate explanations, and in so doing it uses the analyses and conclusions of science and reinterprets them from a higher and more comprehensive point of view. In this sense philosophy is the universal science, the science which seeks to organise and evaluate all experience in the light of final principles: it completes the work of the special sciences, correcting the abstractions they involve and connecting the sciences in an organic whole. The ideal would be a system in which all the given elements found their proper place and function. If philosophy comes short in its achievement, this at least is its goal.

Religion calls for philosophic interpretation because it is an aspect, and a very important aspect, of human experience. Whatever value you put upon it, religion is a fact in man's history, and a very arresting fact it is. A contemporary writer, in a well-known book, has pictured the wonder and perplexity which the signs of man's varied religious activity would awaken in an imaginary visitor to this planet. Inquiring into the meaning of this activity, he would be bewildered by the conflicting answers he received. "He would be driven to conclude he was dealing with phenomena the laws and nature of which were little understood by the people among whom he found

himself." [1] And the author goes on to cite some of the definitions of religion which have been given by eminent men who have discussed the subject. It might seem, then, we are confronted at the outset with a baffling difference of opinion about what religion really is. Closer examination will show, however, that many of the definitions are not contradictory, but differ by emphasising a particular aspect of the phenomenon to the neglect of the other aspects. They are partial rather than false, inadequate rather than mistaken. As a matter of fact we know what religion means in the organised society of to-day sufficiently well for practical purposes, and sufficiently also to understand the general outlines of the field we are proposing to investigate. More exact delimitation is only feasible after detailed inquiry. Indeed a full answer to the question, What is religion? cannot properly be given at the outset and before a patient examination of the historic facts. This examination is necessary ere we can hope to draw a clear line between what is religious and what is secular. We can only realise how much is involved in religion by following the course of its development and studying the manifold forms in which the religious spirit has expressed itself. There is a fallacy in the idea that you can grasp the true meaning of religion in one of its phases, say in the most primitive form of the religious consciousness of which there is any record. For the difficulties of interpretation in such a case are very great; and there is truth in the contention, that we cannot rightly judge what is in the germ until we see what comes out of it. In the growth of religion the knowledge of the later phase helps us to appreciate the earlier: and the study of the development in all its stages is the best guide to an understanding of the principles which are at work.

A Philosophy of Religion, therefore, presupposes religion as a living fact in the development of the race, and recognises the existence of inner experiences of which religious acts are the expression. It cannot begin by

[1] Kidd's *Social Evolution*, 1894, p. 87.

selecting any particular religion as the type or standard by which to judge the degrees of truth or error in other religions. At all events, if such an opinion is held, it can only be fairly held by the religious philosopher when it emerges as the conclusion of a wide and dispassionate study of the facts. There is a provisional assumption, however, which I think he is justified in making, and which the progress of his study may be trusted to verify. It is that religion is a normal and constant aspect of human life, and the utterance of a permanent need of man's spirit. That religious ideas are the product of arbitrary and accidental experiences, which gave rise to customs and were maintained by tradition, is a theory which has no plausibility at all. The older notion that religion was artificially invented, is now universally admitted to be absurd. Religion has degenerate forms, no doubt: *religio* may sometimes be justifiably taken in the Lucretian sense of *superstitio*. The fact, however, that we recognise forms of religious deterioration, is an evidence that there are normal features which we believe a religion ought to possess: the existence of disease is conditioned by the fact of health, and the perception of defects implies a standard of rectitude. What the normal features of religion are we cannot decide merely by a speculative theory of the religious relationship: and just as little can we determine from a purely empirical study of religious phenomena what religion ought to be. On the other hand, by examining experience we may reach principles on which experience itself depends; so the investigation of religious development may be the means by which we gradually recognise and make clear to ourselves those essential and determining principles which are implied in the nature and growth of religion.

The problem of the specific nature of religion did not arise, in early culture. Slender differentiation of function is a feature of primitive societies, and at the primitive stage, religion had not defined itself as a well-marked phenomenon over against other forms of social activity.

Religion interfuses itself with the mass of social usages and customs, and it is often difficult, even after a considerable study of the subject, to say whether a particular act has a religious significance or not. At this epoch the individual accepted his religion very much as he accepted his language: it was a part of his social inheritance, and he appropriated and enjoyed it without putting to himself the question why he did so. But when man has entered on the life of civilisation, when science, art, and morals have begun to differentiate themselves from religion, then the proper nature and meaning of religion become a problem to him. Man asks himself what is the distinctive character of his religion, how he is to distinguish what is sacred from what is secular. He inquires what religion does for him, and how far he is able to justify his religious acts and beliefs. Especially was this the case when a conflict of interest arose between religion and other elements of social life. The question became all the more urgent when men acquired some knowledge of religious systems other than the one under which they had grown up. For they were then driven to consider how to separate the true from the false, the accidental from the essential, the permanent from the changing. So religion passed from the domain of things accepted on authority to take its place henceforth among the problems of life. How can man best solve this problem of the nature, function, and value of religion? I have already pointed out that only a study of the development and the concrete forms of religion can enable us to understand its essential nature and to define it. And in precisely the same way an insight into its function and value can only be gained by a knowledge of the way in which it works and has worked in various environments and at different stages of man's progress. Moreover, by keeping in contact with the actual phenomena of religious experience, we guard ourselves against setting a subjective impression in the place of an objective fact. The development of religion, however, is an exceedingly wide subject.

A great field of inquiry here opens out before us, a field which up to our own day has not been fully explored. And it is too much to expect that the religious philosopher can personally traverse this broad territory and make himself acquainted with all its varied features. He must call to his aid other labourers who have devoted their energies to sections of the field, and receive from them the materials he requires. Of course, not all the materials he can thus command are relevant to his purpose, and they vary greatly in their importance. He has therefore to exercise a selection upon the mass of facts, and he will be guided in his selection by the principle, that only what casts light on the nature of religion comes properly within his purview. Let me illustrate what is meant. A great deal of curious information in regard to the practices of exogamy and totemism may be set aside, because it throws no light on religion. But totem-worship, on the other hand, is an important phase of religious development, and has a real bearing on the historic growth of the religious relationship.

The sciences which offer materials to the Philosophy of Religion will be the History of Religions and the Science of Religions, the former giving an account of the evolution of religions, and the latter gathering up and classifying the various phenomena which they exhibit. The science of Comparative Religion, so far as it has yet been developed, will furnish knowledge of the common features as well as the differences between religions, and will draw attention to empirical laws or observed uniformities in the process of religious evolution. It need hardly be said how important it is to have work of this kind before us when we are trying to understand the nature of religion. The material which has been gathered together by the History and the Science of Religions during recent years is very great, and even tends to become embarrassing to the thinker who is striving to evolve order and system out of the facts. Still the very plenitude of facts is a safeguard against premature and onesided generalisations.

But facts, regarded as mere facts, are of no use to the

religious philosopher: he requires to find out their meaning. In trying to do this he has to bear in mind the distinctive character of the phenomenon with which he is dealing. The facts of religion are decidedly different from facts in the sphere of mechanics or biology. The difference is this: the former are the expressions of conscious minds and wills, while the latter are not. That is to say, in the natural sciences you can work out your problem without the help of Psychology, but in religion you cannot do so. Religious phenomena are essentially reactions of the mind upon the experienced world, and their specific character is not due to the material environment, but to the human consciousness. The formative factor is mind or spirit. Hence the interpretation of religious acts is impossible without the help of Psychology, and no student of the meaning of religious development can hope to succeed without a sound psychological equipment. An analysis of consciousness and a knowledge of the functions and values of the different psychical elements are implied in an endeavour to read the meaning of religious phenomena. To construe, for example, the growth of religion through biological analogies, or by means of metaphysical categories, signifies that we are viewing the process *ab extra*, and are not in sympathetic *rapport* with the interior and moving forces. Hence, if we are to reach a general conception of the nature and meaning of religion through a study of its development, we must regard that development in the first instance as a continuous expression of the human mind seeking satisfaction for its needs. For man makes religion, and religion everywhere bears the impress of the human mind. The broad similarities that run through the religions of the world have their origin in the common mental structure of man. It might seem that this is a superficial conception of religion, but it must be remembered that we are not, at this stage, dealing with its ultimate nature or final explanation. We are trying to understand it as a vital human experience. We might

put the point we are seeking to make thus: the synthesis by which we give meaning to the facts of religious development must be, in the first instance, a psychological synthesis. The unifying principle which immediately underlies the multiplicity of religious phenomena is the psychical nature of man.

But the study of the religious consciousness from the psychological standpoint brings out an important fact. It shows that the religious mind, as it understands itself and its own striving, looks beyond itself for the explanation of its experience. Religion for the religious can never be a subjective experience merely. In religion man's spirit goes forth in faith, and makes demands on the larger world of which he is a part. He claims to know, and to relate himself to a Being above himself; to find his goal in a sphere which transcends the present form of existence. The problem then arises, Is this claim to knowledge justified? Is it consistent with the nature and powers of the human mind? A discussion of this subject will involve an examination of the different attitudes which it is possible to take up in regard to the point at issue. There is the agnostic attitude, which signifies that any knowledge which claims to go beyond the experienced world in space and time is illusory and must be rejected. The so-called supersensible world, dear to faith, is only the shadowy projection of human hopes and fears. Then it is possible to take up a position directly opposed to the foregoing, and to maintain that, in principle at least, thought can penetrate all things, and no limits can be set to reason. There is, finally, the critical way of regarding the problem. In this view man has neither absolute nor perfect knowledge, nor is he closely bound down in his knowing to the world of sensible experience. The very fact, it is argued, that man can exercise a process of criticism on the claims of knowledge shows that, if human knowledge is partial, it is also growing and cannot be severely limited to any determinate sphere. But besides this general treatment of the scope of knowledge there is

also needed a discussion of the validity of religious knowledge in its specific character. For religious cognition differs from scientific. The religious consciousness does not primarily make its postulates in obedience to the demands of rational thinking: it is not impelled to make them by stress of pure logic. No doubt it may proceed to justify its postulates by reflective thinking, but they were already made before they became the object of conscious reflexion. In brief, these postulates are not rational deductions but values: they are values which are posited in response to the demands of the inner life, and correspond to its needs. Such values, regarded as goods attaching to Reality, are apprehended and affirmed by an act of faith on the part of religious people. In familiar language, men believe where they do not comprehend. The faith-attitude is characteristic of the developed religious mind, and it is the form in which most religious persons apprehend the object of their worship. Plainly, this faith cannot be the antithesis of knowledge: in fact it must be knowledge of a kind, though its free use of analogy distinguishes it from the logical understanding. The validity of faith, then, as the organ of religious knowledge, will have to be examined, and the relation of faith to scientific knowledge requires discussion. The conception of value is essential to faith, and so in this connexion the relation of value to rationality will demand treatment. This naturally leads up to the important and difficult problem of the nature of truth, and special reference must be made to the form in which the problem arises in religion.

The epistemological discussion of religious conceptions and standards of truth broadens into the general question of the truth of religion. The notions of 'function' and 'value' are not self-sufficient; we have to deal with their validity and justification. And this is a matter which, if raised in the sphere of epistemology, cannot finally be settled there. To answer this problem means, in the end, that we deal with the whole problem of the nature and

significance of religion. Some thinkers, we have already noted, decline to enter on this task. They argue that a metaphysical inquiry, such as is here involved, must be barren of any sure results; and they maintain that the truth of religion is just its practical value. But religion itself, we must remember, claims that its postulates are true, and that in the sense that they are objectively real; and we cannot deny man's competence to deal with the ultimate problem without at the same time casting doubts on the validity of these postulates. If we cannot make it plain that these demands are consistent with the nature of reality, then the demands can only be justified on subjective grounds, and their validity becomes uncertain. If the religious spirit itself shared this uncertainty, it could not maintain itself in health and vigour. Let the pious man become convinced that his faith is a sort of speculative venture, a wager which he makes at his own risk in the hope that it may turn out well, and his faith will dwindle. "Probability," said Bishop Butler, "is the guide of life"; and this is true in many regions of human affairs. In our estimate of how others will act, or how the course of events will run, we make our decisions on the strength of what is likely, not of what is certain to happen. But a religion founded on probabilities is a kind of contradiction in terms, because the religious spirit lives and acts in the full assurance of faith. One might say, therefore, that religion itself imposes on us the obligation of trying to justify it by philosophical thought. For religion appeals to the whole man, and reason ought not to be at constant discord with feeling and will: otherwise the spiritual house is divided against itself and it cannot stand.

A Philosophy of Religion then, if it is true to its task and frankly faces the issues which it has raised, cannot avoid dealing with the problem of the ultimate truth of religion. The difficulty of the question is beyond dispute, but just as little can its importance be gainsaid. A psychological treatment of the subject leaves us in the position that we understand the function and value of our

religious postulates; we know the part they play in normal religious lives, but we are without assurance of their validity. A justification can only be given, if it is to be given at all, by speculative thought. Only by reaching the ultimate ground of religion and determining the principles upon which religion depends, is it possible for us to appreciate its final meaning and to defend its place in human experience. The metaphysical problem here involved has two aspects, a general and a particular. In its general aspect the question is how we are to reach and determine the ground of experience as a whole: in other words,—What are the final presuppositions of the world as a system of existences manifested to experience? The method of answering this question is to bring out by reflexion the implications of an experience which is an orderly and connected whole, and to rest them upon an adequate basis. So far we have a problem in general Metaphysics which must be worked out as such. But there is also before the mind of the religious philosopher the further fact, that his specific object is to elucidate the final ground of religious experience. For religion is a characteristic and enduring fact of human life, and the religious activity, throughout all its historic phases, forms the most significant expression of man's attitude to the universe. In the developed personal life of man his religion is the practical utterance of the ultimate meaning he reads into the world and his own existence. And it is important to bear in mind, that any conception we reach of the final Ground of experience must be consistent with this specific form of consciousness in man. Nay more, such a Ground ought to be able to explain how it is that religion arises and persists in human culture. It may be argued that religion is a changing thing, its claims are not always consistent the one with the other, and we are no more bound to find a place for its demands in our scheme of the universe than for any of the myriad forms of imaginative belief which the race has created. Yet is not this to prejudge the question? We do not dispose of a

phenomenon by calling it an illusion,—an illusion requires to be explained. Moreover, the religious thinker is fully justified in contending that there is nothing arbitrary and evanescent in religion: it is a dominant aspect of man's experience, present in the most primitive culture, developing with man's development, and continuing to play a part in the maturest forms of civilisation. The existence of this very distinctive kind of experience within the complex totality of human life is a fact which a candid thinker cannot but regard as important; for it colours by its presence and activity the larger whole of life within which it plays a part. Any philosophic synthesis which left no room for it would, *ipso facto*, be condemned as inadequate.

In elucidating the ground of religious experience, a Philosophy of Religion has to examine and set forth clearly the postulates which practical religion involves, and this will be the fruit of a study of the concrete facts of religious development. The problem, in the first instance, is historical and psychological. We put the question of validity aside in the meantime, and proceed to sift and examine the facts. Not by an induction on a narrow basis, but by a wide outlook on the phenomena, must we strive to arrive at a conclusion. It does not follow that, after we have explicated the claims which the religious consciousness makes on reality, it is the duty of a Philosophy of Religion to justify these claims as they stand. They must be scrutinised and tested, and, it may be, revised and restated. For religious experience is a part of experience, not the whole; and the philosopher must keep in view a fact which the religious man does not directly consider,—the fact, namely, that the postulates of religious experience can only be valid when they are presented in a form which is consistent with the presuppositions on which the total body of experience rests. In the task of establishing harmony between the parts, criticism and modification of claims may be necessary, and on this point a Philosophy of Religion will pronounce judgment. I do not think it is unduly to anticipate the discussions which

follow, if attention is here drawn to the truth that emerges from a study of working religion, the truth that in religion the teleological point of view is dominant. The religious mind is concerned primarily, not with the explanation of things, but in adapting means to ends and organising all lesser ends towards the fulfilment of a chief end, conceived to be of highest worth. It regards experience and treats things from the standpoint of value. The religious man surveys life *sub specie boni*: he relates values to a Supreme Value or Good, and an ultimate Good becomes the test and measure of all other goods. To know, hold converse with, and enjoy this Good, is the chief end of spiritual endeavour. There runs through all religion the impulse after communion and fellowship with a divine Object that can satisfy the needs of the soul. And in developed religion this fellowship is recognised to be ethical and spiritual: it is a communion of finite spirits with a supreme and perfect Spirit. The religious man posits by an act of faith his supreme Good: he does so in response to the demand of his inner life, which calls for a goal and completion to its own spiritual endeavour. This object religious faith construes as a Person: for only the personal life makes values real, and only personal communion can satisfy the soul which craves a living embodiment of goodness. Hence the validity of this postulate of a Divine Personality becomes a central problem for religious philosophy. And it is clear that if the postulate be entirely rejected, the religious consciousness must be treated as more or less illusory.

In working out the metaphysical problem of religion, there are two lines of thought which have to be kept in view. The experienced world, for which an ultimate Ground is sought, unfolds itself before us in a double aspect: it is, on the one hand, a connected system of existences, and, on the other, a system of values. These two aspects are not rigidly separated: indeed, they blend together in the world-process. That which is fact seen from one point of view, from another may be regarded as

value. The system of existences is the basis on which the kingdom of values develops: this kingdom grows up out of the living interactions of persons in a social whole. Within this personal life of the social system, religion maintains itself as a specific phase of culture. The regress from the experienced world upon its ultimate Ground must therefore reach a Final Cause which is adequate to sustain the world in its variety and complexity, in its higher and in its lower aspects. To arrive at an ultimate Source of things which apparently explained the uniformity and continuity of existence, but left no room for the kingdom of values which has emerged in the historic development, spells failure in the task. Closer examination will show that an explanation which does not explain the higher as well as the lower is not even an explanation of the lower. We only know how much is in a thing by seeing what it comes to be. The old principle—which goes back to Aristotle—still holds good, that the lower is rather to be understood through the higher than the higher through the lower. The Ground of experience manifested in the form of a connected system of beings must likewise be the Sufficient Reason of personal spirits and their value-experiences. To put it in a slightly different way: the Supreme Being, conceived as First Cause of the natural order, must also be thought as the Source of the moral and spiritual order of the world. Whether it is possible to establish a continuity between the realms of fact and value through the Ground on which both depend, is a question which naturally arises. But it is not possible to answer it without an examination and discussion of the conditions involved. In any case the ultimate Ground of things must possess such a character that it can bring into being and uphold the internally connected whole of facts and the graduated kingdom of values. Otherwise, we have not reached a principle which explains religion.

A Philosophy of Religion which succeeded in determining the Sufficient Ground of man's secular and his religious experience would thereby be in a position to assign its

place and meaning to religion within the system of experience. The intention of the religious thinker is to furnish an answer to this problem, although it may well be that his achievement falls short of his purpose. In trying to execute this task, he is at the same time attempting to connect the knowledge given in the form of religious ideas with the larger whole of knowledge, and to establish, if he can, harmonious relations between them. This is not an obligation which presses on the religious mind in the actual process of realising the religious relationship; for its knowledge, as we have seen, is in the form of faith, and is gained, not by the exercise of the understanding, but through the needs and demands of the inner life. It is otherwise with the speculative thinker who sets himself to think out the meaning of experience, and of religion as a form of experience. The endeavour to establish a coherent relation between the various spheres of knowledge in the light of a Supreme Principle must result, in so far as it is successful, in giving a deeper meaning to the parts than is possible from a standpoint within any one of them. A Philosophy of Religion, therefore, in the discharge of its synoptic function, strives to complete, and it may be to correct, the knowledge we possess in a religious or spiritual form. Only from the issue of an inquiry of the kind are we in a position to speak of the truth or ultimate meaning of religion, and so to go beyond the treatment of it in terms of function and social value. If a metaphysics of the ultimate Ground of experience transcends human capacity, as Kant, for example, believed, then it is plain that a Philosophy of Religion in the full sense of the word is not possible. For Psychology, with the help of Epistemology, gives but a partial treatment and is silent on ultimate issues.

It will be seen from this short statement of the case that the problem of a Philosophy of Religion is complicated and difficult. When we rise to the height of the issues which are involved, we find ourselves embarking on an arduous speculative enterprise; for we are setting ourselves

to answer the hard metaphysical question of the ultimate nature of reality. A religious philosophy which is dumb on this matter has left its work unfinished. But apart from this, the task is not easy because of the wide and diversified nature of the field which has to be covered in the course of the investigation. The origins of religion and its primitive manifestations require a competent discussion of the anthropological questions which have come to the front in recent years: and the treatment of the developed forms of religion, necessary in order to understand its nature, means an adequate knowledge of the History of Religions. Then the Psychology of Religion, resting as it does on General Psychology, must guide us in the interpretation of religious phenomena. Finally, by way of epistemological discussion, we have to proceed to a speculative theory. A religious thinker can hardly be expected to put himself forward as an expert in all these different fields, and especially in an age when limitation and concentration are more and more coming to be the condition of original work in any department. Still, he must have an adequate knowledge of several sciences; and he cannot afford to be ignorant of any one of these if his work is not to suffer in consequence. There remains the task of correlating these different lines of research, of giving to each its due, and of unifying them in the service of a central end. This is a work of some delicacy, and it is not likely that the individual student is without some bias in one direction or another. The speculative treatment of religion, for example, is easily overlaid by the historical, and may become vague and inconclusive in consequence. Just as easily may Psychology be ousted from its proper function by Metaphysics, and in the result, theory and facts may not harmonise. The latter danger will certainly be lessened if we advance gradually from the study of religion in its development to its speculative interpretation. And not until we mount to the speculative standpoint can we overlook the wild fields through which we have passed, and appreciate the features of the whole.

At the beginning of this discussion it was pointed out that a Philosophy of Religion could not properly make any one religion the norm and standard of truth. If such is the case it is a result to be reached, not a thing to be assumed. But just as unscientific would it be for the philosopher to apply himself to his task in the conviction that no religion is true, or that all are equally false. An initial prejudice like this bars the way to fair treatment and dispassionate conclusions. At the same time the religious philosopher, though he should go to his work with an open mind, ought to have sympathy with religion and some personal experience of it. Apart from this sympathy there cannot be an adequate valuation of religious experience and an insight into spiritual motives. In the case of material facts, mechanically related, the external standpoint will suffice. But in religion the facts are primarily psychical, and are the revelation of human thought, feeling, and will. In the duty of appreciation, personal sympathy—the capacity through our own inner life to enter into the feelings and aspirations embodied in the phenomena of religion—is a condition of a discerning interpretation. Nevertheless the sympathy, to be of service, must be of the catholic kind which is wider than race or creed: *nihil humani a me alienum puto.* And this broadly human outlook ought to go hand in hand with a single-minded love of truth, and with the honest desire to seek and to find it. There are "idols of the den" as well as "idols of the market-place"; and a thinker must be on his guard against the one as well as against the other. The student of religion is working in a domain which is largely under the sway of the feelings, and the temptation is strong to allow the prejudices to warp the judgment. Not without effort, not without discipline, can he hope to see the truth and see it whole.

C.—THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION IN RELATION TO (1) PHILOSOPHY, AND (2) THEOLOGY.

It will help to give greater definiteness to our conception of a Philosophy of Religion, if we consider briefly the relation in which it stands to Philosophy and to Theology. The answer to the first question would seem at first sight to be quite simple: the Philosophy of Religion is just the application of philosophical principles and methods to religion regarded as a matter given. The speculative mind is directed to a certain aspect of experience, and reports the results of its examination. Formally this is clear enough, but in the practical working out of the problem a great deal will depend on our conception of the actual scope and powers of philosophical thought. If we maintain the possibility of a completed System of Philosophy, then we cannot concede to the Philosophy of Religion any independence of the System. Like a member of an organism, it has a well-marked place and function assigned to it, and its meaning essentially depends on its relation to the whole of which it is a part. Now it will probably be granted by most people that the aim of Philosophy is system: it seeks to rationalise, it strives to make manifest the systematic unity of the universe upon which the connexion and coherency of its elements rest. Accomplishment, however, may come short of intention; and it matters much in settling the question we have in mind whether a speculative system is an ideal, a regulative conception which we use to guide our thought, or is a realised fact. The latter, it is well known, was the belief of Hegel, though it is not likely that many thinkers in our own day would admit that Philosophy has achieved so much. Still his idea of the organic whole of the speculative sciences is of interest to us in the present connexion, for it is a profound and suggestive attempt to show the precise place which a Philosophy of Religion occupies in a fully articulated speculative System.

According to Hegel, Philosophy, in its dialectic movement or process of explicating itself, is also the explication of religion.[1] The speculative System as well as the Philosophy of Religion has God for its object, God conceived as the Absolute. But the Philosophy of Religion differs from the other philosophical sciences in beginning with the idea of God instead of reaching it at the last: in the one case it is the *terminus a quo*, in the other the *terminus ad quem*. Again, while Philosophy treats the Absolute as primarily Logical Idea, the Philosophy of Religion regards it as object, the mind or spirit which appears or reveals itself. Religious doctrine presents the idea of the self-revealing God in the form of figurative thought: the Philosophy of Religion criticises and purifies these representations in order to raise them to the speculative form. To put the theory succinctly: the Philosophy of Religion shows that the truth of religion is the speculative Idea of God; while Philosophy shows us how the Idea or Absolute has differentiated itself in nature, in spirit, and in religion as a phase of the movement of spirit.

Without entering into detailed criticism, certain general remarks suggest themselves. There is, it appears to me, an element of truth in the Hegelian conception of the relationship now under review. A Philosophy of Religion depends on Philosophy: it is the application of philosophical thought to a specific phase or stage of experience in order to determine its general meaning and value. The explanation of any aspect of experience must be governed in its methods and principles by the methods and principles by which we explain experience as a whole. The idealistic interpretation of experience, for example, carries with it as a consequence a Philosophy of Religion constructed on idealistic lines. But the assertion that Philosophy can develop a complete System which gives a full and final meaning to each of its parts, must be subjected to serious qualifications. Reality can never be entirely absorbed in

[1] *Phil. der Religion*, vol. i. p. 21 ff.

the process of rationalising it, and explanation itself rests in the end on postulates that cannot be transformed into logical elements in a system. We do not comprehend a thing by bestowing a name upon it; and the constant presence of unrationalised elements makes a final System an unattained ideal. We therefore deny that Philosophy has such a mastery over its materials, that it can exhibit in the light of a system the precise meaning and value of every aspect of experience. Owing to the presence in the universe of much which is unexplained, ultimate unification cannot be other than provisional. And if this be so, we must claim for the special philosophical disciplines a greater measure of independence than was conceded to them by Hegel. For each in its way is contributing to the development of a system rather than exactly determined by it. This is apparent enough in the case of religion. There is more in the religious consciousness than can be derived from any dialectic development of consciousness in general, and religious philosophy has the facts directly before it and handles them on its own responsibility. It should deal faithfully with the many and varied phenomena of religion, whether it succeed in giving them an adequate philosophical interpretation or no. The relation of the Philosophy of Religion to Philosophy is rather one of interaction and co-operation than of complete logical dependence. In practice at all events this is so; and it cannot be otherwise, since the idea of a completed philosophical System remains an ideal.

But the claim for a certain independence on the part of a Philosophy of Religion ought not to be pressed too far. The general standpoint from which it treats experience, and the forms and conceptions it uses in dealing with religious experience, are derived from Philosophy. It cannot arbitrarily create special forms and methods for its own service; it must draw them from the common speculative inheritance that has come down from the past. The dominant Philosophy of the age supplies the principles which men apply to religion in order to develop a theory

of religious experience, and it determines in a general way the character of a religious philosophy. If the prevailing type of philosophical thought at a particular period be idealistic, dualistic, or realistic, it will be reflected in the way men interpret the meaning of religion. The Deistic notion of religion, for instance, is the reflexion of a general philosophical tendency or temper of mind: so likewise, the speculative theologies and religious philosophies of the post-Kantian epoch are deeply influenced by the far-reaching idealism which prevailed. It may be added that Idealism is the form of philosophical thinking which leads most readily to a philosophy of religion, inasmuch as mind or spirit is of primary value both for idealism and religion. Materialism, on the contrary, is a form of thought which is antagonistic to religion, and when it is accepted, it leaves no room for a philosophical theory of spiritual experience. The only task left for the materialist in respect of religion would be to demonstrate that it is and must be an illusion.

The difficulties of any attempt to isolate the Philosophy of Religion from Philosophy become plainer when we remember that the philosophical treatment of religion is not a simple process. It involves Psychology and Epistemology, Ethics and Metaphysics; and to suppose that a religious thinker can evolve principles for himself in each of these departments is absurd. In every case he is dependent on the work already done in these provinces, and this even when he tries, as he ought to do, to think things out for himself, Were he foolish enough to attempt to cut himself loose from the philosophical inheritance of his age, he could not entirely succeed in doing so. A purely religious philosophy, standing on its own ground, though it appeals to a certain type of mind, is not a workable conception; for it is not possible to dissever religious experience from other forms of experience, and in striving to understand religion it is also necessary to look beyond it.

The objection to a Philosophy of Religion which re-

cognises a general dependence on Philosophy, has been urged from the side of Theology, and especially by theologians who are hostile to Metaphysics. The supreme truth of religion, it is held, is contained in Christianity, which is the revealed religion, and the most and best we can do is to explicate and state systematically the truths it contains. In recent times, Ritschl has given outspoken expression to this view, and has argued strongly against the intrusion of metaphysics into the sphere of religion. In his short work, *Theologie und Metaphysik* (1881), he takes his stand on Christianity as a historical revelation, and protests, not without force, against the fashion of importing into it metaphysical ideas which are alien to its substance. If men are resolved to philosophise about religion, he tells us there is but one way to do so to any profit, and that is to set out from the Christian idea of God as scientifically valid, and to develop a world-view in dependence upon it. In other words, we cut the Philosophy of Religion clear from Philosophy by identifying it with a Philosophy of Christianity, and by developing our own religious categories and principles. This conception of a Christian Philosophy of Religion finds favour with some in our own day, and one can understand the desire for a kind of spiritual philosophy, preserving the religious interest throughout, and removed from the fluctuations of speculative opinion. Yet the conception does not appear to be tenable, and it would be hard to defend it successfully against various objections. We have already argued that it is impossible to develop a religious metaphysics which neither draws from nor depends on metaphysics in general. There is a fallacy in the notion that you can find the whole truth in any particular phase of experience, however important; and for a like reason no religion can be isolated from the rest without losing significance in consequence. It has been said that the man who knows no book but the Bible, does not even know it rightly; and it is the same with a religion. No single aspect of reality is "cut off with a hatchet" from the remainder, and to

know any one thing you must see its relations to other things. Only to this large outlook do the characteristic elements in a given religion stand forth; and to understand the ethical and spiritual value of Christianity, one must recognise not merely its distinction from, but its relations to other religions. Christianity is supreme not because it is severely separate from all other types of religion, but because it is their goal and completion. Hence a Philosophy of Christianity, if it were to rise to the fulness of its task, would perforce widen out into a Philosophy of Religion. And the latter, in its turn, cannot successfully deal with religious experience in abstraction from the rest of experience. In other words, it must perform its work, recognising its relations to and receiving help from Philosophy as the universal Science. We cannot philosophise in compartments, and in the search for truth, breadth is necessary as well as concentration. The idea, then, of a Christian Philosophy of Religion which has its own form and content, while it is inspired by a sincere purpose, is not right in theory nor feasible in practice. We can either have a Christian Theology or a Philosophy of Religion, but we cannot properly combine the two. It is not possible at one and the same time to preserve the religious authority which is claimed for the one, and to maintain the freedom and largeness of vision which are demanded by the other.

2. We pass now to the second question, the relation in which the Philosophy of Religion stands to Theology. The two differ distinctly in their scope, and this is evident after the slightest examination. When we use the term *Philosophy of Religion*, there is no doubt about the field of study to which we refer. It is religion, as a universal phenomenon in human experience, which we are proceeding to examine. But the word *Theology*, used to denote a system of Dogmatics, is ambiguous. The further query will follow: What theology? Is it Jewish, Christian, or Mohammedan? If it be Christian, we have still to find out whether it is Roman Catholic or Protestant. The

term therefore requires qnalification ere we understand definitely what is meant. In its nature a theology is an articulated system of religious beliefs or doctrines which has been developed from some historic religion. In intention it is a statement of the truths which have proved themselves the working-values of a given religion: and it strives to present them in an intelligible form, so that they can be taught, and serve as a bond of union for a religious community or Church. The proper office of theology is not to criticise the religious experience out of which it grew, but rather to deal faithfully with that experience, and report what is implied in it. What is called "Speculative Theology," which seeks to raise religious doctrines to a philosophical form by exercising a free criticism upon them, is better ranked with religious philosophy.

The significance of theology in relation to religion will be better appreciated if we indicate briefly the process by which it comes to birth and develops. Theology always presupposes the existence of a living religion, and religions which have advanced to a certain stage naturally produce theological doctrines. Theology is anticipated and prepared for by tendencies which exist in the early forms of religion. The centre of a religion is the cultus, and the primitive way of explaining the traditional acts done in the cultus is to recite myths or legends about them. This was a crude though obvious plan of imparting a kind of meaning to religious usages handed down from the immemorial past, from the days when men moved in a world of instinctive beliefs, and reflective thought had not asserted its claims. With the great development of the personal consciousness which took place after the formation of national religion the rude form of reflexion passed into a higher form, and man began to make a conscious endeavour to explain and generalise the meaning of his religious rites and customs. The cultus is still the centre which offers a relatively stable material upon which reflexion is exercised and out of which

religious doctrines are fashioned: these express the meaning and value which the community attaches to its religious activity. There are various causes which stimulate theological construction in a religious society: for instance, the expediency of presenting religious truth in a shape which can be taught; the need of defining what is true in opposition to rival religions and to heretical doctrines; and, finally, the felt obligation of meeting the demands which science and philosophy have made articulate. A decadent religion will not respond to these stimuli, but a vigorous faith will meet these needs and answer these demands by developing its doctrines and connecting them in a systematic way. Primarily, religious doctrines are designed to set forth the values of religious experience; but in the higher stages of culture, theology seeks to invest religious beliefs with a degree of reasonableness. It strives to become a system whose parts cohere with and mutually support each other. From the nature of the case, theology cannot be philosophy; yet in its maturer age, when science and philosophy are exercising an influence in the world around it, theology is prompted to enlarge its scope and to broaden out in the direction of a religious philosophy. The theologian passes beyond the original view of his office, which was to report faithfully the working conceptions and values implied in a given religion. He seeks now to unfold a world-view, based on religious postulates, but for which he also claims rationality. The motives that inspired this movement are not difficult to discern: the methods of explanation used in science and philosophy could not be altogether ignored by the theologian. Hence we find theology offering explanations of the nature of God, the creation and development of the world, and the origin of man. Doctrines bearing on these themes have entered into the structure of Christian Dogmatics, and have been embodied in the creeds of all the Christian Churches. When we consider the way in which theology was developed on these lines, we recognise that, in intention at least, it occupies a mediat-

ing position between faith on the one hand and reason on the other. Beginning with an explication of faith-experiences, it ends by offering what purports to be a rational view of the world. In this latter aspect of its development, however, Christian theology has become entangled in controversy, and has had to bear the brunt of criticism. Theology has failed to advance with scientific and philosophical culture, and in consequence its doctrines on the nature and origin of the world and man have fallen out of harmony with the knowledge of the age. Hence the so-called conflict between Science and Religion, about which so much was heard in the middle of last century. The dispute, when closely examined, was seen to gather round doctrines which theology had pushed forward under the shield of religious authority, but which really fell within the province of science. A dispute of the kind could only end in one way, theologians have been forced to resile from untenable positions, though time has shown the issues at stake were greatly magnified.

The controversy to which I have referred draws attention to a difficulty which attends an endeavour on the part of theology to mediate between faith and reason. The difficulty arises from presuppositions from which Christian theology set out in forming its doctrinal system. The Sacred Writings, it assumed, were an authoritative basis, and the truths which could be gathered from them were divinely sanctioned, and provided an assured ground for inference. The appeal in this instance was not to a continuous spiritual experience which could be examined, but to statements in documents of very different dates and character. When theology therefore, building on statements taken as authoritative, proceeded to develop doctrines for which the claim of rationality was made, the position became insecure. The scientist refused to admit some of the premises from which the theologian set out: the latter retorted by declaring he took his stand on truths divinely revealed. The awkwardness of the theologian's position resulted from the double method he had em-

ployed: on the one hand claiming *rationality* for his doctrines, and on the other repelling criticism by an appeal to *authority*. He laid himself open to the objection, that he ought to employ one method or the other, for it was impossible to use both consistently. And it must be granted that many of the difficulties which have beset theology in modern times are the result of an attempt to fuse together methods and principles which will not naturally blend. This remark applies to Protestant as well as to Roman Catholic theology.

If theology is to enter into some kind of organic relation with a Philosophy of Religion, and to prove a connecting link between faith and reason, the principle of authority which it invokes should be wider and more convincing than documentary evidences. In the end, the ground of authority must be the character of the spiritual experience itself, with the historic values which have grown out of it, and the faith which is its living expression. The degree of authority which attaches to Sacred Books is secondary and derivative: it depends upon the purity and fulness of the spiritual experience they embody and the worth they possess for the religious life. The authority of Christian theology centres in the intrinsic superiority of the spiritual values which it sets forth,—values not for one age merely, but for every age.

It is not consistent to maintain that the sole sources for authoritative theological doctrines are spiritual, and yet to say they are limited to certain inspired periods and spiritual movements which lie in the distant past. And this not because such periods do not possess a supreme value for the religious development of man, but because every attempt by a later age to generalise the religious meaning of these great movements must be influenced by its own life and culture. Thus successive epochs of Christian history show us the Christian Church of the time reading, unconsciously often yet none the less really, its own temper and ideals into the primitive record of the origins of our faith. So it is that the Present steadily

contributes, albeit without observation, to the meaning and value of the Past. Ignoring this truth, theologians imagined they could express the meaning of religion in doctrinal forms which would be valid for all time, and would serve from generation to generation as the authoritative embodiment of the Church's faith. Still fettered by these prejudices, theology in modern times has progressed with difficulty, and the modern religious consciousness is finding it increasingly hard to take the ecclesiastical creeds for the expression of its own meaning and aspirations. The Philosophy of Religion has thus to some extent displaced the older Dogmatics in the regard of thoughtful people, and in the circumstances the relations between it and ecclesiastical Theology are somewhat strained. Nor is it likely they will be different until theology renounces the claim to finality and frankly accepts the principle of doctrinal development.

It may be well to say at this point, that philosophy need have no quarrel with theology because the latter accepts postulates of faith made on grounds of value. The Christian experience, of which theology is the explication, ultimately rests on truths which are held on the assurance of faith, not on logical demonstration. No rational deduction, for instance, can give for its conclusion the Christian idea of God: faith makes it real, not logical proof. In view of the stress philosophy lays on the principle of rationality, it might seem that the presuppositions of theology were unfavourable to any close relation on its part with a Philosophy of Religion. This is true, no doubt, if the theologian takes faith in the narrow sense of beliefs held upon authority: it is not the case if he sets out from postulates of the religious life. Faith, conceived as postulates or demands which our inner life makes on the world, is by no means limited in its operation to religion. It pervades practical life, and neither science nor philosophy can dispense with it. The process of rationalising is never complete, and the exercise of reason rests in the last resort on postulates which

cannot be rationally deduced. In this respect the difference between theology and religious philosophy is one of degree only: the one lays greater stress on faith, the other on reason; but reason cannot work without faith, and faith has its proper ally in reason.

The conclusions we draw may now be briefly stated. Theology is and must remain the exposition of the doctrines of a definite and historic religion. The principle of authority to which it appeals must not be external, but the enduring spiritual experience of which the religion is the practical and institutional expression. That experience, however, ought not to be arbitrarily limited to a particular epoch: it should not be conceived to begin at one point in history and to end at another. In other words, the theologian must take his stand on the development of religious experience, and he must abandon the idea that theological doctrines can assume a stereotyped and final form. This is only to give its due scope to the principle of the spirit leading the spiritually minded into fuller truth. But while thus enlarging its idea of experience, theology ought to abstain from excursions into the domain of metaphysics. It will not be denied that a good deal of metaphysics has found its way into Christian theology, and some of it, to say the least, is of questionable value. The objection to this intrusion is, that theology is going beyond its legitimate sphere in developing metaphysical theories, for they stand in no direct and vital relation to the religious experience and the spiritual values of the religious life. Authority is not to be claimed for them, inasmuch as they cannot invoke the principle which alone would invest them with authority, the witness of spiritual experience. This is far from saying that religion ought not to be brought into contact with metaphysics at all; but it does mean that theology is not the proper science to deal with the metaphysical issues involved. Theology may be well content to leave the speculative problems of religion unanswered, and to hand them over for solution, if a solution be possible, to the

Philosophy of Religion. The latter in virtue of its larger outlook is in a better position to deal with them ; and so the religious philosopher comes in to complete the work of the theologian. The latter in consequence of the definitely limited task before him should be satisfied to allow others to handle the ultimate metaphysical problems connected with religion. Yet it is impossible for man, rationally constituted as he is, to set these problems aside, or to acquiesce in treating them as insoluble. And the growing importance of the Philosophy of Religion in the present day is partly due to the knowledge that it occupies ground on which the full and free discussion of these topics of perennial interest may properly take place.

In practice, it may be granted, it will sometimes be difficult to keep theology strictly apart from a Philosophy of Religion. For they deal with the same materials, and the exposition of the meaning of a theological dogma passes easily into a philosophical interpretation of it. And for the theologian who has no antipathy to metaphysics, the temptation to develop a speculative theory is not readily to be resisted. Nor will any harm ensue, provided his speculations are put forward as speculations, not as theological doctrines. What must be deprecated is an unwitting confusion of the two points of view. Hence it is right to insist that any speculative treatment of theological doctrines really belongs to the province of religious philosophy, and must be judged as such.

PART I.

THE NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGION (PHENOMENOLOGICAL).

CHAPTER I.

THE PSYCHICAL BASIS OF RELIGION.

A.—The Psychical Nature of Man.

If asked what the nature of religion is, the ordinary person might have little difficulty in furnishing an answer. He will single out some feature which strikes him as characteristic of piety; and if he has little or no knowledge of religions other than his own, he will have the less hesitation in returning a reply. To one who has some acquaintance with the varied phenomena and the diverse forms of religion, the problem does not seem so easily solved. He asks: Where does religion begin, and how are you to distinguish it from mere superstition? What test are you to apply in order to determine the presence of religion? and is it possible to define certain points which are common to every form of religion? What, for instance, is the common denominator of Buddhism and Roman Catholicism, or of devil-worship and the Religion of Humanity? There seems here to be little or no similarity, whether we regard the temper of the worship or the objects worshipped. In this perplexity he will probably be led to the conclusion that he cannot discover any hard and fast test which can be used as a standard of what is religious and what is not. He will also recognise that it would be arbitrary to make his own feelings and judgment the criterion in this matter.

With the best will in the world, no man is able to divest himself entirely of prejudice and personal bias. But what the student of religion may fairly do is this: he can take the religious consciousness of the society in which he lives and which he shares, and he can properly assume that there is a continuity between it and earlier stages of religious development. For continuity is involved in growth, and if there were no continuity discussion would be futile: we could not even be sure we meant something similar when we spoke of ancient religion and the religion of to-day. But assuming this, and setting aside the question of an exact definition of religion in the meantime, let us consider the general principles which are at work in bringing about the relation which is broadly termed religious. There is no better way of coming to a right conception of what religion means, than by studying the principles which generate it and govern its evolution from the past to the present. Accepting provisionally some such minimum definition of religion as Tylor has given in his *Primitive Culture*—"a belief in spiritual beings"—we may seek by an examination of the phenomena to come to a clear idea of what is essential and constitutive in the religious relation. A verbal definition which is everywhere and always applicable may be difficult, and it is not indispensable. It is of more importance to understand those constant conditions which bring religion into being.

Taking for granted, then, that there is a continuity in the development of religion, that between the highest and the lowest form of the religious consciousness there are links of connexion, we are justified in inferring that the key to the interpretation of the process is to be found in the spiritual nature of man. For religion is a spiritual process, and the secret of its nature and growth cannot be found in the outward world but in the human soul itself. At the outset two questions present themselves which may be briefly discussed. First of all, What is the origin of religion? and second, Does religion play a universal part in human experience?

The second question is the simpler, and we take it first.

Anthropologists are now generally agreed that religion, in the sense of a belief in spirits or higher powers of some kind, is a universal phenomenon. No race has been shown to be entirely without some such belief. Stories of low tribes who are quite destitute of religion involve mistake, misunderstanding, or the application of too high a test of what is religious. Writing fully half a century ago, Waitz put the case clearly and justly: "Superstitious ceremonies which point distinctly to a belief in supersensuous powers nowhere are wanting."[1] And in more recent times Ratzel returns the same verdict: "Ethnography knows no race devoid of religion, but only differences in the degree in which religious ideas are developed."[2] Of course, if any one takes the religion of a highly civilised race for his standard, he can say truly enough that all races are not religious; some have only superstitions. But this method is arbitrary, and it ignores the continuous process of development between the highest and lowest stages of culture. In the light of the principle of development we can discern in the rudest social groups those rudimentary beliefs and practices which are the beginnings of religion.

The first question, that of the origin of religion, is of greater importance. It is possible, however, to regard it in two different ways. In the one case we may suppose the task set to us is to fix the time and circumstances in which religion first came into existence. When and where did men first perform acts which revealed the beginnings of religious belief? This is a problem of historical origin, and in this instance we neither have, nor are ever likely to have, the data at our disposal by which to solve it. The few thousand years of which there is any historic record are only an insignificant fragment of the time man has lived on the earth, and the origins of the race are shrouded in obscurity. We cannot lift this veil; at the most the scanty remains from the older and later Stone Age enable

[1] *Anthropologie der Naturvölker*, vol. i. p. 323.

[2] *History of Mankind*, vol. i. p. 40; *vid.* also Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. i. p. 417 ff.

us to picture in rude outline the long and arduous struggle of humanity, ere it emerged from the night of barbarism into the light of history. At what point in this age-long development the religious spirit began to stir and quicken man to action it would be futile to inquire, and of no great advantage to know. In all probability it was with religion as with language: it came into being by a gradual process in which the transition from the sub-religious to the religious was imperceptible. We may be content to leave the matter thus: and, after all, the issues are not of much consequence.

The really important problem in connexion with the origin of religion is the psychological problem: What were the motives which prompted man to be religious? What were the feelings, impulses, and ideas which conspired to bring about in man the state of mind we term religion? We are here dealing with a workable problem, because there are data which help us to answer it. There is a unity in human nature in virtue of which psychical processes in the present supply a key to those in the past. In his intellective functions man has made great progress; but behind the intellectual life are the fundamental feelings, instincts, and impulses which persist through all the stages of development. Though transformed they are not obliterated. Man, civilised and uncivilised, as Goethe said, is moved by hunger and by love. It is from the study of these abiding needs and desires, interacting as they do with the environment, that the most hopeful prospect opens out to us of understanding the way in which religion breaks into life and growth. The problem is how, assuming the principles of the psychical life, we are to conceive these principles operating in primitive man and impelling him to express himself in religious acts. Certain general influences must have been at work, influences not created by particular local circumstances and conditions. In every form of religion man seeks to establish a helpful relationship between himself and higher powers. The impulse to form this relationship, and to secure satisfaction through it, proceeded from a felt need; and this need must have been

latent in human nature, only requiring stimuli from the environment to quicken it to utterance. The presence of a need, however, is significant of an incompleteness in the subject which experiences it, of some uneasiness or lack of harmony which the individual strives to change into a state of satisfaction. Were man a being spiritually complete, or were he doomed to remain for ever unconscious of his own defects, then in neither case would the motives which lead to religion be present. He would not strive to link himself to higher powers, for he would not need them, or he would not be conscious of his need. The universality of a felt need is the secret of the universality of religion. The uniformity with which religion comes to birth in human experience is the symptom and expression of the common character of man which lies behind his religion. Man's religion is coloured by his environment, for the environment gives shape to his particular wants; but despite endless variations in the surroundings, the similarities which pervade early religious ideas and customs are remarkable, and they cannot be due to imitation or borrowing. In the case of social groups widely separated in space and time, the theory of borrowing is not tenable. The broad likenesses in religious beliefs and practices have their source in the spiritual nature of man, which is active in the production of religious phenomena. The ways in which he seeks satisfaction for his religious needs broadly correspond, just because an identical psychical constitution determines these needs. In truth all historic phenomena are the outcome of human wills acting and reacting on one another and on the environment, and so psychology is of primary importance in the study of human development. The psychological method is the method by which we keep in touch with the influences that go to the making of the facts. Those who work on this plan are less likely to offer vague generalisations for explanations, or to manipulate the facts to suit their theories.

If we take the psychical nature of man as the basis from which to discuss the origin and development of

religion, our first step must be to scrutinise the basis carefully. How much is implied by the term 'psychical nature,' and what is to be excluded as non-psychical? The question is more important than appears on the surface, for the answer we give will affect our psychological interpretation of religion. At first sight it might seem the simple and obvious thing to say, that our psychical nature is just the various mental processes of which we are conscious when our minds are at work: consciousness, in other words, is the note of what is psychical. But it only needs a slight examination to show that our conscious activity is not a self-contained whole with sharply defined boundaries. For it is closely related to and implies mental processes of which we are not conscious. The clear region of consciousness fades gradually into a dim and sub-conscious region in which psychical processes exist, although they do not normally rise above the 'threshold of consciousness.' Consciousness has been suggestively compared to the field of vision, vivid and distinct at the focus but becoming blurred towards the margin, now expanding and now contracting its range. But at one point or another the illuminated space melts into the obscure tract of the subconscious, though the point of transition cannot be definitely marked. To the latter sphere belong the psychical traces and dispositions involved in the functioning of memory, and in the performance of actions which are automatic or have become mechanised. To this sphere likewise belong the mental processes implied in the activity of the instincts, and those dim feelings which are linked with the performance of organic functions. We draw steadily on our subconscious resources in the use of memory, and events which have left traces in the subconscious region, though they have passed out of remembrance, may continue to affect our feeling-tone. Hence psychical processes of which we are conscious may be stimulated by influences coming from the subliminal sphere. A continuous interaction goes on between the two spheres, and neither is intelligible apart from the other.

Our psychical being really consists of the totality of the conscious and subconscious elements, and at each moment of the soul's life there is a blending of more or less conscious processes. Already certain religious phenomena, notably mystical experiences, have received a suggestive interpretation on the hypothesis of subliminal activity. And the general question arises, whether the influences which prompt man to religion do not proceed from the subconsciousness. Through the subliminal door, says Professor James, transmundane energies operate within our ordinary world.[1] A follower of James claims that the 'feeling mass' which lies beneath the play of conscious processes is the source of a racial or instinctive wisdom.[2] While an English psychologist of eminence believes that instincts are "directly or indirectly the prime movers of all human activity."[3]

It will not, I think, be denied, that some religious phenomena have light thrown on them by connecting them with subconscious processes. And it may also be granted that influences proceeding from man's instinctive life have affected his religious ideas. Moreover, subconscious factors, in the form of dispositions, slowly accumulated and transmitted, help us to understand the working and the continuity of the religious spirit. But what, it seems to me, is unwarranted, is to set the conscious over against the unconscious elements in the human soul, and to make the latter the ground and explanation of the former. I refer to the method, followed by von Hartmann and others, of treating the conscious life as a superficial manifestation which constantly reflects and is determined by the play of the deeper unconscious processes. It is doubtful whether we are entitled to speak of the unconscious at all: there is only evidence of degrees of consciousness, more or less. Now consciousness, which is the more complete and developed function, gives the key to the subconscious. Psychical process is purposive throughout, not mechanical;

[1] *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 524.
[2] *Psychology of Religious Belief*, by J. B. Pratt, p. 23.
[3] *Social Psychology*, by W. McDougall, p. 44.

and the higher aspect of the soul's life is the end or realised form—Aristotle's τὸ τί ἦν εἶναι—of the lower. Consequently man only realises his nature as man when the subconscious is related to the conscious as means to end, and the end dominates the means. Feelings and instincts are not blind forces rising up from beneath and impelling man in fixed and inevitable ways. When these subconscious tendencies come into consciousness, they are transformed and invested with new meaning and value by the self or completed mind. For instance, apart from a conscious mental activity, instinctive feelings could never be elevated into religious motives; and we find evidence of this in the fact that the animals never develop an attitude which can be called religious. This seems to show that consciousness is constitutive of the religious relation. Religion, once developed, may leave traces which work subconsciously, but active mind must first give experience a religious meaning ere such processes can have any bearing on religion. It may be added that it is only too easy to appeal to the unconscious in order to explain religious phenomena, and von Hartmann has been blamed for following this simple method when he is confronted with what is obscure and difficult.

I go on to make some general observations on the psychical nature of man regarded in its relation to the development of religion. Psychical processes should be studied from the point of view of growth: there has been a psychical development of the race just as there is of the individual, and the latter helps us to understand the former. The simplest type of action is impulsive action directed outwards. Conative activity, which is the inherent property of life, is the primitive and persisting factor out of which the higher functions are slowly differentiated. At the lower stages of conative life, idea, feeling, and will are blended in one, and experience may be described as a feeling-continuum in which differences are submerged. Specific reactions at first are purely instinctive, though purposive in the sense of being life-

conserving. These life-conserving impulses gradually come to be qualified by an obscure psychic element, and this is the dim beginning of conscious experience. The rudimentary idea is at first tied to the corresponding act, and is symptomatic, not determining. It is a crucial point in psychic evolution when these ideas are liberated from bondage to the specific reaction, and function as free memory-images. These free ideas make the acquisition of meaning possible, and so become the condition of learning by experience. For a meaning is implicitly universal: it always extends beyond the particular instance. The special development of the centres of association and retention in the human brain has made possible for man a greatly increased use of memory, and memory in its turn is the condition of a complex organisation of ideas. Man's growing capacity to generalise and abstract has been the means by which he has won for himself a psychical life which he recognises to be his own: through the use of ideas as the instruments of his will he has come to know himself as a self-conscious centre of experience over against his environment, and to distinguish inner from outer experience. The reflex and instinctive elements continue to function in the lower strata of his psychical life, but the old tyranny of impulse has been broken by the enhanced power of mind. By the exercise of thinking, man emancipates himself from bondage to the immediate present: he looks before and after, he deliberates and adapts means to ends. Thus he attains the status of a voluntary agent and a morally responsible being. These are the broad stages of the way traversed by the human soul in its upward struggle from blind conation to self-conscious freedom.

The process of development here sketched in barest outline takes place in the individual, and we may assume that the general stages of the individual's development were originally traversed by the race.[1] In race-development it is important to remember—and this is my second point

[1] Absolute correspondence, it will be observed, is not asserted, but only a general similarity.

—that the individual and collective factors are inseparably related, and the problem of the evolution of man's psychical nature cannot be solved on purely individualistic lines. It is a law of the universe that isolation is incompatible with development: progressive evolution never takes place except where there is an interaction of elements. It is equally true of the lower world of organisms and of the higher world of psychical selves, that latent capacities are only called forth by the process of interaction. In the case of man it is the fact of his existence as a member of a group or social whole, composed of beings like himself, which is the indispensable condition of his psychical growth. Aristotle fully recognised that man was a πολιτικὸν ζῷον, whose proper nature was only realised in and through society. And modern social science, working in the light of the principle of evolution, has clearly perceived and emphasised the principle. The isolated individual, we are often told, is a pure figment of abstraction, and apart from the influence of society we cannot tell what he would be. Each individual, in virtue of his membership in society, enters into a rich mental inheritance, which he appropriates but does not create, and what he receives in this way goes far to make up the contents of his mind. Think how much we owe to language, custom, and belief; and these were not individual inventions, but the product of ages of social growth. They form the continuous and ever-present social atmosphere which the individual absorbs naturally and inevitably, just as he inhales the atmospheric air. From this influence he cannot escape even if he would: it is around him in infancy and it abides with him to the last. On the higher levels of spiritual development, man, indeed, attains a certain independence of his psychical environment. He may form opinions which are opposed to those of his social group, and he may break with ways of acting which have become traditional. Yet even in the case of the highly developed personality, the things held in common far outweigh those where there is difference. And it is

of consequence to remember that, when we trace the evolution of society backward to its earlier stages, the dependence of the psychical units on one another becomes closer and their similarity more transparent. Independence of mind, originality, readiness of fresh initiative, tend practically to disappear when we approach the beginnings of culture, and man's psychical life seems more and more to fall into a colourless and monotonous uniformity. The sway of custom and tradition is imperious, and it is an unheard-of thing that an individual should oppose his own beliefs to those of his tribe. A man's religious beliefs, for instance, are those of the group to which he belongs, and this was as much a matter of course as that he should speak the same language as his fellows. If we distinguish two factors in mental development, a constant and a variable, then it is the constant which dominates early culture. The variable factor comes into prominence at the highest stages of evolution when the mental functions are fully differentiated. But behind the variable factor is the constant, consisting of the permanent instincts and the accumulated psychological dispositions which are the outcome of race-experience. In primitive society, then, the variable factor is sacrificed to the constant. Or, to put it otherwise, the lower strata of the soul-life, the common impulsive and instinctive ground which is the basis from which development proceeds, is predominant. The very narrowness of human consciousness at this early epoch, and the absence of any reflective outlook on things, make the members of the group more susceptible to common psychical influences. The 'psychical infection,' such as one can still see running through a modern crowd at a time of tense feeling or elemental passion, must have played a more constant part in the beginnings of human culture. Owing to the lack of reflective thought it had fuller and freer scope. In virtue of these influences which permeated the social body and were experienced by all the members, some writers speak of a 'group spirit.' At all events we can say, that the psychical traits which

marked the primitive clan or tribe were reflected with singular regularity in each of the individuals who composed it. Hence it is psychologically intelligible that the earliest forms of religious activity we can trace reveal an almost total want of anything like an individual attitude in religion. Everywhere the members of the tribe seem to feel, believe, and act in the same way in all that concerns religion.

The essential dependence of man's psychical life on his membership in society is emphasised by the phenomenon of language. Than speech there has been no more important instrument of human development, and speech is a social product designed to serve common ends. The need for communication and co-operation lies behind the origin of language. Steinthal has suggested that the first human utterances were reflexive cries which evoked a sympathetic response; and if we accept the evolution of man from subhuman forms, there must have been, as H. Paul has said, a long period of confused utterance and the most varied articulations. The psychical capacity of man to evolve language was the result of his higher cerebral development, and the stimulating factor was the urgent need of communication acting on a capacity for imitation. The problem of the origin of language is a purely psychological one, and it is not necessary to discuss it here. The point to keep in mind is, that a considerable progress in the use of speech must have taken place ere the existence of religious ideas became possible. Terror in presence of the forces of nature, such as we see in animals, may exist apart from the power of speech, but this is not religion. We can only speak of religion where there is the idea of a relation to higher powers, and the conception of such a permanent relation is made possible by language. It is important to note, that there goes with the growth of speech a way of regarding the world which led naturally to the development of a religious relation. Language expresses thought, and all thought proceeds in the form of judgments. In judging we are always referring an

idea or mental conduct to something beyond itself. The simplest kind of judgment is an exclamation directed to some phenomenon or event which arrests attention; and this helps us to understand why roots, which are the most primitive stratum of language, are verbal forms expressive of activity and movement. A psychological distinction of subject and predicate is necessary from the first,—the cry or exclamation to have meaning implies this—but with the growth of language a logical differentiation of subject and object was developed on the basis of the psychological distinction. This linguistic development issued from and gave explicit expression to a principle involved in all experience, the principle, namely, that experience means an experient subject which is the centre and support of its own states. Without this sustaining centre of reference experience would disappear. The self as the ground and unity of its own states is the type on which the relation of subject and predicate was evolved. The type of judgment thus formed was applied instinctively by man to the objects in the world around him, and things were construed as substances which were the active centres of their own states or qualities. So human judgments were elaborated on an animistic basis. Primitive man everywhere instinctively projected his own form of experience into his environment and interpreted in terms of his own life. He involuntarily peopled the world with a multitude of beings akin to himself. And the form of primitive speech gave natural expression to the animism which lay behind it.

Early man's vocabulary was meagre in the extreme, and it was but slowly extended by the use of analogy and association. Beyond question man, in his upward struggle, made a decisive gain when he became able to employ the word as a symbol for an object, in order to bring the same object before the mind of his fellows. Ere man had evolved the psychical capacity to give some linguistic mark to the object he perceived, to remember it by means of the mark and to communicate to others the way in which it impressed him, we cannot suppose there was

religion in the proper sense of the term. This linguistic achievement made practicable the common recognition by the members of a tribe that a constant relation existed between them and powers who could help or hurt them. Mythical thinking had now an instrument with which to work, and the religious instinct had acquired a basis on which to develop itself.

Let us try to represent to ourselves, so far at least as we can do so by the help of inference and analogy, the features of the psychical life which lies behind the birth and infancy of religion. Though reconstruction of the kind is hazardous, we are not altogether left in the dark in trying to draw an outline. Hints to guide us come from two different quarters, and these are valuable if used with caution and discrimination. I refer to the help which may be derived from the study of the child, and from the habits and mental qualities of savage races which have survived to our own time. The evolution of the child mind has acquired its relevancy for our present purpose from the biological principle that the ontogenetic process repeats the phylogenetic. In other words, the main stages of individual growth are a repetition of the stages which have been traversed in race evolution. The development of the individual compresses into a brief span the successive advances made by the species during its long evolution. In the case of mental development, if we do not use the principle as a rigid rule, but as a suggestive and helpful analogy, we shall find it valuable. The slight sketch we have already given of psychical growth from mere impulsive action up to reflective thought, a process constantly mediated by contact with a social environment, follows the broad features which are presented by the developing mind of the child. In a large way we can trace a similar psychic development from the savage mind up to the reflective self-consciousness of the highly civilised man. At the same time a word of caution is needed. It will not do to convert a useful analogy into a fixed and ready means of accurately testing what was possible for the

primitive mind of the race and what was not. For, on the one hand, the psychic environment of the modern child is very different from that of the individual in the lowest stages of culture: the mental stimulus and support received from the environment is far higher in the former case than in the latter. And, on the other hand, we have to remember that it is only by an admissible figure of speech that we speak of primitive men as children. They resemble children in many ways, it is true, but, strictly speaking, we cannot say they are children. The impulses and interests of full-grown men and women, however low the level of culture on which they stand, are not precisely identical with individuals at the stage of childhood. For instance, the whole range of feelings and motives which grow out of the developed sexual life are operative in adults, but not operative in the very young. The point is not without importance, for ideas and images derived from the life of sex at an early period gave a colour to man's religious conceptions. Nevertheless, handled with discrimination, the materials drawn from the study of the mental development of children are of service to the anthropologist: they offer profitable suggestions when, as very often happens, direct evidence is wanting.

Exactly the same remark applies to the information gleaned from a study of the life and customs of recent or contemporary savage tribes. Undoubtedly it was the knowledge gathered from an examination of existing savage races which enabled the highly civilised peoples to recognise, in their own customs and modes of thought, the traces which indicated that their ancestors in the remote past had gone through the same phase of development. The service which the study of peoples still in the lower culture has rendered in opening out a view of the course of human evolution is very great; it is not too much to say, that our present conceptions of the prehistoric development of man could not have been formed apart from the stimulus and suggestions thus received. But here, too, care is necessary, inasmuch as inquirers have sometimes

rushed to the conclusion that savage races of the present reveal to us what is really primitive. This is an assumption we are not entitled to make. Compared with our advanced culture they do show us what is relatively primitive: but to say they take us back to what existed at the beginnings of the race is a very different statement. The structure of savage custom and belief changes slowly, but still it changes, and a course of development lies behind the rudest societies known to us. In some cases, owing to isolation and unfavourable external conditions of life, savage races may have deteriorated from a relatively higher culture. But the beginnings of the race belong to a period so remote that it would be unwarrantable to suppose that the lowest races of the present day—say the Australian aborigines—exhibit to us primitive conditions. It has, for example, been inferred that, because traces of belief in a great god are found among tribes in Australia, Central Africa, and elsewhere, primitive religion must have been a kind of monotheism, from which spiritism was a degradation. The conclusion is vitiated by the uncritical assumption on which it is based.

There is no direct evidence of what was really primitive in human development. The psychical qualities of the earliest ancestors of the race must remain a more or less plausible reconstruction from inadequate data. But using such evidence as can be got from the study of children and savage tribes, we can draw some general conclusions in regard to the psychical life of which the early phenomena of religion were the outcome. The impulsive and emotional activity was far stronger than in civilised peoples, and life to a much greater degree consisted in the play of stimulus and reaction. Emotional instability was very marked: man was more easily prostrated by fear or shaken by passion, and the power of self-control was limited. The phenomena of convulsion and ecstasy are common in the lower culture, and man has little or no capacity of regulating his life such as a developed mind possesses. With these features went high susceptibility to outward

impressions and dependence upon the environment: when the need of the hour was relieved, physical and mental effort ceased, and fits of fierce activity were followed by times of sluggishness and torpor. An outstanding characteristic of primitive man was weak intellection: hence his inability to generalise, to relate means to more distant ends, and to practise restraint in the present for the sake of the future. Gorged with food one day and wasting what he could not use, a day or two later he might be starving. The primitive mind was constantly governed by the immediate interest, and selfishness was not even tempered by prudence. His feebleness of thinking power made early man very responsive to the experiences of the moment, and belief was easy because the mind was destitute of ideas by which to inhibit or qualify a dominant impression. It is well known that a belief can operate on the savage mind with the power of a fixed idea; the belief, for instance, that some magic spell will cause sickness or death can bring about the result. The outward life which corresponded to this low mental organisation was not an idyllic one, we may be sure: it was a constant struggle to satisfy bodily needs, a life ruled by the play of the natural instincts and pervaded by sombre fears and mean desires.

If we are not able to say how man regarded the world when he was emerging from purely animal conditions, we can at least form a general idea of his attitude to it at the stage when he had developed language into a serviceable means of communication, and was beginning to evolve religious ideas. It was on the basis of a particular way of regarding natural objects and processes that religious beliefs gradually took form. Let it be said at once that early man had no deliberate theory of things; and to talk of a 'primitive philosophy' is, to say the least, very misleading. The germ of truth in the statement is, that savage man did put an interpretation on the objects around him; but it was naïve and almost instinctive, not the conscious solution of a problem. Even the animal draws a distinction between its body and its environment, between

its own movement and the movement of an object, and it is instinctively aware that it can produce effects upon surrounding things: without this consciousness it could not survive in the struggle for existence. It was characteristic of man, however, that he gave a meaning to his world, and this he did by the involuntary projection of his experience into things. Conscious of power, will, activity in himself, he could not conceive of effects in the surrounding world save as brought about by the same principle. Living himself, he saw living beings acting and working everywhere around him. But selective interest would set certain things more conspicuously before him as endowed with functions like his own. The most primitive elements of language, the verbal roots, suggest that man was first attracted by objects in which movement and change were very evident. These would naturally force themselves on his attention. The rushing river and the springing fountain, the waving tree and the howling wind were all beings possessing power and manifesting energy like his own. By an involuntary anthropomorphism man peopled his environment with wills like that which he recognised in himself:

> "Man, once descried, imprints for ever
> His presence on all lifeless things: the winds
> Are henceforth voices, wailing or a shout,
> A querulous mutter or a quick, gay laugh,
> Never a senseless gust now man is born."

This impulse of primitive man to treat the things which impress and attract him in terms of will, it is usual, after Professor Tylor, to call Animism. The reality of this tendency can easily be verified from the beliefs and customs of children and of savage tribes. Eduard Meyer, the distinguished historian of antiquity, has asserted in the anthropological introduction to his great work, that man always drew a distinction between animate and inanimate objects.[1] It is easy to dogmatise on a point

[1] *Anthropologie*, 1910: p. 88. The reasons which led Meyer to this view are not clear, for the statement is made very much *ex cathedrâ*.

like this; and it is natural to suppose that, while early man thought the moving sun and cloud were alive, he believed the ground beneath his feet was dead. Yet does not a fallacy lurk in the supposition that distinctions which have become part of the mental furniture of civilised men must have somehow existed from the first? Surely it is the experience of life and activity which is primary: the idea of the inanimate is secondary and derivative, and is reached by a conscious exclusion of qualities. Man from the beginning no doubt treated objects we regard as lifeless, when they did not by their qualities or manner of acting obtrude themselves on his notice, much in the way that we do. But this is not tantamount to saying that he consciously put them in a different class from animated things. Consistency in his world-view was a matter which gave savage man no concern. In general the outer world of primitive man is the direct reflexion of his own feebly regulated and incoherent psychical life. The conceptions of order and law do not exist; fortuitous association prevails, and anything may be the cause of anything. Selective interest, governed by impressions from without in conjunction with needs from within, determines what objects in nature man brings into closer relations with himself. If we term the primitive *Weltanschauung*, with Steinthal, 'mythical thinking,' then mythical thinking is essentially loose and arbitrary, and is under no other control than that of immediate interest.[1]

B.—The Psychical Elements and the Religious Consciousness.

Up to this point we have been dealing with man's psychical nature as a whole. We proceed now to the analysis of the elements in the psychical life, in order to determine more closely the ways in which they respectively influence the religious consciousness. The distinction of

[1] This term is also used by Wundt in his *Völkerpsychologie*.

psychological elements goes back to the Greek thinkers; and Plato, it will be remembered, based his theory of the ideal state on the existence of "parts" (εἴδη) in the soul. Aristotle, with maturer insight, speaks of functions or aspects of the soul-life, which are only separable in conceptual thinking.[1] The outcome of the Aristotelian psychology was the broad distinction between the appetitive (τὸ ὀρεκτικόν) and the rational (τὸ νοητικόν) aspects of the soul, or, as we might say, between the conative and intellective functions. The threefold division into feeling, thought, and will was first proposed by Tetens (1736–1807), and it received general currency through the approval of Kant. For practical purposes this analysis is still the most convenient, though from the genetic point of view feeling falls nearer to conation than to intellection—a fact which has suggested to some modern psychologists the propriety of retaining a twofold division.[2] From the standpoint of religious psychology, however, it is not essential to go into the ultimate question: in any case the psychical life which man brings with him to the development of religion is one in which the cognitive, volitional, and feeling aspects are already clearly distinguishable. With the development of mind, with its growing consciousness of itself as an independent spiritual centre, its internal differentiation becomes increasingly explicit. And it is intelligible that the older psychologists who studied the developed mind apart from its process of growth, were led to the theory of separate faculties. At the present day the old 'faculty' psychology has fallen into ill repute, and not without reason. It was an illustration of the tyranny of words, of the delusion that you somehow explain a thing by giving it a name. To say, for instance, that our acts of volition proceed from a *faculty* of will, is only to hypostatise an abstraction. What

[1] Cp. *Eth. Nic.* i. 1102, A. 28.

[2] Professor Stout, for example, in his *Groundwork of Psychology*, places conation and feeling together under the head of *Interest* as contrasted with *Cognition*, which divides into Simple Apprehension and Judgment.

we experience and know are concrete acts of willing: the faculty of willing is only a mental fiction. The soul is certainly not divisible into compartments, and while mental aspects are distinguishable in thought, they are not divided in the nature of things. In every psychical process all the elements are involved, though the degree in which they are severally present may be very different. In sudden and overpowering emotion, feeling in dominant and intellection is faint, while in solving an abstract problem intellection is prominent and the feeling-element is feeble. Even in the so-called passive enjoyment of a beautiful scene there goes with feeling some degree of attention and interest, and this signifies the existence of will. A perfectly pure psychical experience in which only the one element is present never occurs: in every subjective process the structure of the mind as a whole is involved, and analysis will easily show this. And the fact has an important bearing on a theory of the psychical origin of religion.

When we examine some of the theories put forward to explain the psychical origin of religion, we are struck by the defective psychological analysis on which they proceed. Many of them ignore the fundamental unity of the human mind, and suppose one element may function apart from the whole. For instance, religion has been traced to a special religious organ: its existence is said to be explained by a specific religious sentiment. For this, it need hardly be said, the modern psychologist can find no evidence whatever; and we have here another illustration of the old and faulty method which explained a special form of activity by inventing a special faculty for its basis. More plausible, though not more successful, have been the attempts to trace the origin of religion to one of the psychical functions, to feeling, to will, or to thinking. Feeling, and more particularly *fear*, has frequently been regarded as the impelling force which drives man to religion, his defence against impending ills. According to the oft-quoted line of Petronius, *primus in orbe fecit deos timor*; and this has

been a favourite idea of those who, like Lucretius, identified religion with superstition. Fears visibly drove men to religious rites: smitten with terror they turned instinctively to the gods for help:—

> "Non populi gentesque tremunt? regesque superbi
> Corripiunt divom perculsi membra timore."

In modern times, Hume has laid stress on fear as the motive to religious acts, though he was too acute to overlook the fact that fear could not operate alone. That in fear we have a *vera causa* is not in question. A vague terror of spirits and ghosts of the dead pervades the lower culture, and the savage often dreads to stir abroad in the dark. One can still observe this haunting dread of evil powers among the native tribes of South America, Australia, and West Africa. This fear may sometimes dominate the cultus, as among the devil-worshippers of India. But although fear is a cause, it is certainly not the sufficient reason of religion. Reflexion will show that it is not psychologically intelligible that the motive of fear should work in abstraction from other motives; it must be connected with elements derived from the active or conative side of consciousness. Man is afraid of the loss of some good, it may be life, health, or property: he would not fear unless he had hopes and wishes whose fulfilment he desires. Religion implies the positive attitude as well as the negative, and man's fears are inexplicable if we do not remember there are goods on which his heart is set. Feeling, then, in the form of the emotion of fear, is only a partial explanation of religion. A somewhat similar criticism must be passed on Schleiermacher's view, that religion arises out of a feeling of absolute dependence. For conscious dependence cannot be a purely negative attitude: it must be sustained by an interest, and this implies the presence of a volitional element. Moreover, the feeling of dependence, however essential to religion, would not by itself constitute a religious attitude any more than a feeling of bodily comfort would do so. To become religious, feeling

must be qualified by a cognitive element, a belief in a power or powers on whom the individual depends, and between whom and himself a positive relation subsists. Schleiermacher confused a condition with an adequate explanation.

The attempts which have been made to derive religion from the conative side of consciousness are not, I think, more successful. They set out from an important truth, but fail to recognise that this principle must be supplemented if it is to work in the way supposed. Ritschl, for instance, conceived religion to come into being in order to solve the contradiction between man's impulse to maintain his independence and his sense of limitation as a part of nature. This theory has been reproduced by A. Sabatier with greater attention to psychological conditions. Man in his psychical life, he says, brings to a higher level the self-conserving impulse immanent in all life. Hampered by the limitations of his environment in his struggle for goods, he experiences distress and suffering of spirit. Out of this entanglement and strife, by a kind of *salto mortale* he finds deliverance and preservation in religious faith.[1] This theory comes nearer to the truth; for it recognises a condition of religion not only in purposive striving, but in the feeling-element represented by the sense of distress and need. And we know that the connexion of feeling and will is more conspicuous in the lower stages of psychical development than in the higher. But Sabatier's conception is defective because he does not take into account the presence of a cognitive element, which is represented in the belief that powers exist who can help man in his need. By laying the stress on the self-conserving impulse he tends to derive religion from purely egoistic desires. But even in primitive religion we see the self-conserving impulse tempered by a further motive, the desire for communion with the god. In the lower nature-religions there seems to exist a sense of sympathy and attraction between man and the objects of his worship, which is not purely selfish.

[1] *Esquisse d'une Philosophie de la Religion*, p. 14 ff.

It is not necessary to say much about the endeavours to explain the rise of religion from intellectual motives. Curiosity, the desire to find a cause of things, is not *per se* a religious motive, and those who seek to derive religion from it fail to explain why religion is so clearly differentiated from science. Moreover, in the earliest culture, reflexion hardly existed: man's primary concern was to live, not to know, or at least to know only as it helped him to live. Primeval man's interest in causes was the outcome of his interest in goods, and his dominant desire was to find satisfaction for pressing needs.

Reviewing the evidence, we shall have no difficulty, as it seems to me, in coming to the conclusion that man's whole psychical constitution is involved in his movement to religion. The desire for goods belongs to man's nature as an active being: and the existence of desire is inseparably linked with the sense of need and incompleteness, and with the feeling-tone which goes along with them. But neither the desire nor the feeling could in itself create the object through relation to which man finds religious satisfaction. This is given by belief; and even belief which is little more than an instinctive idea requires some cognitive activity which selects and holds the object before the mind. And without the superior intellection that distinguished man from the animals and made the growth of language possible, it is safe to say religion would not have come into being.[1]

But while it is necessary to hold fast to the truth that no one psychical element can account for the origin of the religious consciousness, we may freely admit that the

[1] As Eucken's philosophy has lately attracted a good deal of interest, it may be well to point out that his discussion of the "Psychical Basis of Religion" (*Hauptprobleme der Religionsphilosophie*) is not psychological in the ordinary sense at all. He dispenses with an examination of the psychical facts, and announces it is necessary to go beyond the division into psychical elements to an inclusive unity—the "independent life of the Spirit" which builds up a new personality and constitutes religion. The objection to this method is, that it brings in a normative principle without any study of the working of religion, and sacrifices psychology to speculative philosophy.

different elements were not present in the same degree of intensity. The impulsive and feeling factors are more active in the earlier stages of the individual and of the race, and thought is the mere servant of the immediate purpose. Anything like dispassionate reflexion is remote from primitive conditions. It was therefore especially the feeling and conative life of early man that determined the motives which led him to form religious ideas and customs. Behind the rise of religion is the fundamental fact that man is an incomplete being, and his incompleteness is revealed in the constant upspringing of desires which call for satisfaction. Were human needs somehow satisfied as they arose, and were the human soul not doomed to oscillate between hope and fear, expectation and disappointment, man would not be impelled to seek help and comfort in union with higher beings. It is true of the savage and of the civilised man, that the more full and satisfying he finds this earthly life, the less will he experience that yearning for something beyond out of which religion issues. This seems to be the measure of truth in the theory which is sometimes faultily put in the statement, that religion arises from man's 'sense of the infinite' within him. We can at least say that man's consciousness of his insufficiency creates that longing for fellowship with a Reality beyond him through which religion is realised. A common weakness made the scattered sections of the race everywhere religious after some fashion of their own: *πάντες δὲ θεῶν χατέουσ' ἄνθρωποι.*[1] In maintaining right relations with its gods, each group or people seemed to possess a security for its well-being which it could not gain by its own unaided powers. The persistency with which man turns for aid to invisible beings, and that despite many rebuffs and disappointments, is a token of the enduring need which urges him on this quest.

The presence of all the psychical factors in religious experience has been sufficiently insisted on, and we turn now to consider briefly the specific contribution which each

[1] *Odyssey*, iii. 48

makes to the religious consciousness. To the working of the religious relation each psychical factor contributes something of its own which cannot be contributed by the other factors. I begin with feeling.

The range of feeling is much narrower in early religion than at later stages: it is chiefly confined to impulsive emotional reactions, to manifestations of fear, awe, and joy. But as man wins independence and inwardness of spirit, feeling becomes charged with larger significance. In feeling, what is deepest and most individual in religion is expressed, and it lies nearest the centre of the religious consciousness. Suffused by the magical atmosphere of pious feelings, deeds and things not in themselves religious take on a religious value: and apart from this atmosphere, acts of worship sink to the level of the mechanical and commonplace. That intimacy of fellowship with the Divine Object, so dear to the religious heart, is made possible by the play of feeling, and feeling makes a man's religion personal and vital. One does not wonder that Schleiermacher was led to the exaggerated statement that "all absolute feeling is religious." We can see, however, that feeling depends for its intensity and distinctness upon dispositions of the will; and apart from the purposive life, it would lose its practical value. Feeling draws the definiteness of its appeal from its connexion with desires. It is only through its relation to the ends which the will seeks to realise, that feeling can be described as good or bad; and it is only through relation to ideas that it can acquire clearness of meaning, and be termed true or false. Hence, however central and essential feeling may be in religion, it depends for its religious significance on its relations to the other elements, and it grows in purity and range as an element in the concrete development of the spirit. Higher spiritual feelings are rendered possible by the growth of the spiritual personality as a whole.

With the activity of the will the presence of values in human life is intimately connected: the desire for goods, which plays an important part in leading man to religion,

is an expression of the volitional side of his nature. The active and the purposive life of man is reflected at every stage of his religious growth, and lends character to the religious consciousness. The fleeting impulses and the vague yearnings of the primitive period are gradually transformed into conscious desires wider in their range and more enduring in their nature, and they are finally developed into ideals and aspirations which express the character as a whole. The will it is which, by its exercise, forms permanent religious dispositions and tendencies, and so gives reality and continuity to the religious life. Feeling is apt to be spasmodic: it fluctuates and varies in intensity, and one mood rapidly gives place to another. The heart or inner disposition is relatively constant, forming the permanent background of character, and it is gradually fashioned by the activity of the will. Thus through the energy of the practical self a constant religious disposition is built up, which gives a centre of support and so a more stable quality to the religious emotions. At the same time, and in the same way, religious ideas and beliefs are invested with steadiness and reality. A belief to persist must be suffused with interest; it must be taken up into, and play a part in the structure of the purposive and personal life. In the early stages of religious evolution, when the theoretical spirit hardly exists, a belief must be acted out, and so become a working value, or it will fade away. Even in the most developed religions, ideas which are only remotely connected with the facts of the spiritual life are notoriously feeble and ineffective. Through our wills we actualise our beliefs, and make them a part of ourselves. Religious ideas, again, are a means of actuating the will: they give direction and meaning to feeling, and it is through ideas that man has slowly raised himself to the vision of religion as life, and the religious life as a reasonable service. If intellection is not so near the centre of religious experience as feeling, it is nevertheless the most important factor in religious progress. Ideas are the instruments

whereby man generalises his experience, and renders religion the common possession of the tribe or people. Thought first encircles religion with myth and legend; afterwards, exercised on religious experience, it translates it into doctrines, which become a traditional inheritance and can be taught. The stimulus to the criticism, modification and development of a religious system, is more particularly due to the intellectual factor, which is susceptible to influences from the environment. The pressure of thought, demanding that a religious system be internally coherent, and also consistent with secular knowledge, is able to overcome the conservative tendencies fostered by feeling and habit. Developed thinking, stimulated by ideas drawn from science and philosophy, urges to religious progress: the fixity and the sameness of primitive religions are largely due to weakness of thought. In the realm of thought men co-operate freely, man sharpening the countenance of his friend. Only through the combined toil of many generations of minds have religious ideas been delivered from their ancient vagueness and rudeness. Thought has gradually liberated religion from its native narrowness, and enabled it to exercise an enlightened and universal appeal.

The different psychical elements are seldom or never present in an equal degree, either in individuals or in society as a whole. The excess of one element over the others engenders a definite and easily recognisable type of religion. When the feeling element prevails, piety is termed emotional or mystical; when thought predominates, piety is termed intellectual; and where will takes the lead, it is called practical. And the types of religion we see in individuals, we can also discern, broadly reflected, in the religious temper and life of an age. The fact, however, that man seeks a full satisfaction and the completion of his life through his religion, precludes him from attaining his goal in any single and pronounced type of spiritual experience. An inner harmony of all the spiritual powers cannot be achieved in this way. The need for this

harmony is revealed in the process by which man ever and again modifies his religious beliefs and practices in order that they may yield him a fuller satisfaction. Religious feelings which knowledge cannot sanction, practices which are mechanical merely, and ideas which are devoid of sentiment or practical value, all sooner or later provoke a reaction which issues in some development or readjustment. The ideal would be a relation to the religious object on the part of the subject which would harmonise and finally satisfy his whole nature. To some such goal the religious spirit in man seems to strive, despite many failures and disappointments.

C.—The Religious Relation: its Subjective and Objective Aspects.

Our examination of the psychical elements, and the manner in which they function in religious experience, has now to be supplemented in another direction. In and with the working of the religious spirit there is always implied a reference to an object other than the subject; and the idea of a religious experience which is felt to be purely subjective is contradictory. Religion can only be stated in terms of a relationship, and any human experience which annuls all relation *eo ipso* ceases to be a religious experience. This truth is recognised in the descriptions of religion as a bond or a communion, for connexion logically presupposes the existence of difference, or terms brought into relation. Most clearly does this appear in the central act of religion, in worship. For worship means the going forth of the spirit to a Reality beyond itself, in order to realise a good which it cannot find within itself. The worshipper certainly believes in this Reality, and if he did not believe he could not worship. A pronounced pantheism which denies the possibility of this reference of the self to a Reality above it, necessarily reduces the religious consciousness to an illusion.

At the present stage, when we are dealing simply with the psychological question, we are not called upon to discuss the nature of this Reality nor the validity of the act which posits it. It is enough to say that the religious spirit in its psychological working postulates a real object, and just now we have only to consider the psychological character of the relationship. How does the religious mind feel and regard itself in this relationship which it deems to be essential to its own spiritual life? The religious consciousness accepts and affirms the existence of the object to which it relates itself, and it does so by an act of belief. In belief there is a cognitive element: it is more than mere awareness, it is a judgment which maintains itself; and a religious belief is one on which the individual is prepared to act. The sense of reality, however, which is given with belief could not be generated by a purely intellectual act. For the judgment by which we affirm a fiction in which we do not believe, does not differ in its structure from one in which we affirm a fact in which we do believe. There is something more in belief than judgment, but in the case of such an elementary act it is not easy to say exactly what this something more, this specific quality is. Professor Stout, for instance, speaks of belief as "a unique mode in which consciousness refers to the object."[1] The intensity of belief, as well as its inwardness and personal character, is distinctly due to the presence of an emotional element. The influence of feeling seems to make the difference between an impersonal opinion and a personal conviction. "An idea assented to feels different from a fictitious idea that fancy alone presents to us," says Hume; and he traces to a 'peculiar feeling' the power of belief to invest ideas with vividness and stability.[2] But along with this superior liveliness and force which Hume noted in belief, there goes also the feeling that the object obliges us to think so about it. Belief, unlike fancy or

[1] *Analytic Psychology*, vol. ii. p. 238.

[2] *Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. Selby Bigge, pp. 96 ff., 624 ff.

supposition, is not a state purely dependent on the will of the subject. It is the recognition of something which is, something we do not make, but which makes us think about it in the way we do. But while there is this coercive element in belief, it is well to repeat that the activity of the will—the steady acting out of our beliefs—is of great value in giving them vitality and persistence. If we do not make our beliefs 'working-values,' the feeling-tone which gives them reality appears to fade.

The relation of the subject to the object in religion is psychologically one of strong belief, and this continues to be a condition of the satisfactory working of the relation. The presence of doubt or uncertainty always means a lessening of religious vitality. At the lowest stage of religious development belief is greatly facilitated by the strength of the emotional reactions of early man. The individual believes easily, because his mind lacks those systematised ideas which inhibit fresh suggestions that will not cohere with them. The development of such mental systems is the condition of a critical attitude to the impressions that come from the environment. The possession of these systems by racial inheritance gives civilised man a great advantage over his barbarous ancestors. The civilised man may be a creature "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," but he is saved at all events from the consequences of a boundless credulity.

In the maintenance of religious belief there are two influences which operate constantly, and at every level of development. The first of these may be called the social factor in belief. Neither the spirits of the savage nor the God of the civilised man are the objects of a belief which is peculiar to himself: he knows his belief about them is also the belief of his tribe or race. Man is a social being who has an instinctive dislike of isolation; and the social atmosphere is the medium which sustains beliefs in the minds of individuals. In the very fact that he thinks and holds for true what all his fellows around him do, man sees a pledge and an assurance that he is not

mistaken. Common belief is the ground of common action, which in its turn reinforces belief; and what appeals to all in the same way seems to bear the stamp of reality. In early culture the dominance of the group over the individual is reflected in the monotonous identity of beliefs in the members. And the force of the social factor is enhanced by the influence of tradition. At every level of culture the power of tradition in determining belief is apparent. The present age is linked by a continuous chain to a distant past, and the beliefs of to-day have been handed down from the fathers to the children through many generations. Society with its long tradition thus becomes a constraining power over the individual, and he is almost impotent to cast off the spell of its authority. The savage, when asked a reason for a religious rite, deems it sufficient to reply, that it is an immemorial custom of his tribe. Hence the conservatism which is a note of primitive culture, the inhospitality to new ideas, and the slow rate of progress which is everywhere manifest. But even in a highly civilised and progressive society, beliefs which remain purely individual are ineffective and do not maintain themselves: in order to become working forces they must enlist the support of society, and become living convictions shared by many. The continuity of religious beliefs is secured by the fact that they are part of the social inheritance to which each individual falls heir. He assimilates them in youth, and in manhood they have insensibly become part of his way of thinking. For example, at present the creed of a church is not maintained by the way in which it appeals to the reason of the great majority of those who profess it. Many decent people would be puzzled to give a reason for the faith they profess. They accept it largely because it has the sanction of society, and is part of the system of tradition and custom under which they have grown up and lived their lives.

The second factor which contributes to the maintenance of religious belief is its constant expression in religious

acts. If emotion vivifies, it is the will which gives substance and fixity to religious ideas by bringing them into an intimate connection with life. It is especially through the common cultus, which is the permanent centre of religion, that religious belief in its social aspect acquires its prevailing strength. The cult is a kind of dramatic acting out of beliefs in which all the individuals of a group share, and by constant repetition it gives force to the ideas which underlie it. Every vital impulse which takes possession of the mind necessarily seeks utterance in action, as Wundt has said, and it is acts of worship which give stated and recognised expression to the religious impulse.[1] Hence the cultus is an indispensable part of every religion, and religious belief as a social force could not flourish without it. Social worship brings home in dramatic fashion to the worshipper the fact that his belief is shared and attested by the religious community of which he is a member. If worship is not the whole of religion, it is a great and vital part of it; and no historic religion but has given to it a central place. Even the votaries of a new religion, like the religion of Humanity, recognise that without worship of some kind their faith has no chance of surviving. On the point with which we are now concerned—the bearing of the cultus on belief—it is well to note, that organised worship strengthens belief by connecting and giving some degree of cohesion to the separate beliefs which are implied in the religious consciousness. I have spoken hitherto of belief in a divine object, but strictly one should rather speak of beliefs. Man's attitude to divine powers is always more than the single belief that they exist: it also involves the conviction that these powers are capable of different attitudes to man corresponding to specific acts on man's part. As man develops so does his conception of the gods, and the structure of beliefs becomes complex. These are related to one another and expressed in the cultus, and the feelings and sentiments which worship

[1] *Völkerpsychologie, Mythus und Religion*, Bd. ii. pt. 3, p. 738.

evokes help to cement them together. Hence a kind of system of belief develops, and each single belief receives support from the system in which it has a place. It becomes difficult to discard one element when this cannot be done without weakening the other elements which are connected with it. Accordingly, when a religious doctrine is assailed, those who attack it commonly try to show, in the first instance, that it does not form a necessary part of the structure of belief.

We conclude, then, that religious belief, which represents the objective aspect of religious experience, is essentially dependent on the mediation of society. From the social whole it derives stability and continuity. As far back as we can trace religion we find that, like language, it is a social heritage, and the single man does little or nothing in the way of invention or innovation. The religious relation develops, but in primitive society the process is so slow that it proceeds without observation. The broad principle on which advance takes place is, that man's growing knowledge of himself and the world must be reflected in his conception of the divine object. But a rapidity of movement which amounts to visible revolution is only brought about with the breaking up of the old social medium and the rise of new and larger forms of social organisation. These far-reaching changes weaken the power of old tradition, and lift man's eyes to the vision of wider horizons. He then sets to work to reorganise his beliefs, and a revised and enlarged system comes into being which gradually acquires a prestige of its own. But at whatever stage man stands, and in whatever terms he conceives the relation between himself and the object of his faith, what he seeks in the religious relationship is the harmony and satisfaction of his inner nature, which he can never find in his prosaic and often unkindly environment.

CHAPTER II.

THE BEGINNINGS AND GROWTH OF RELIGION.

A.—Tribal Religion.

It is impossible to give a clear conception of the function and meaning of religion without some study of religious ideas in their beginnings and growth. The nature of an idea, institution, or phase of culture must be reached, if it is to be reached at all, by an examination of its process of development. But one can hardly enter on a survey like the present without feeling oppressed by the mass and complexity of the materials which have to be handled. For this is a field in which many workers have been busy, and the relevant matter has increased enormously in bulk during recent years. Moreover, various points in regard to the origin and relationship of different religious conceptions are by no means settled, and to discuss these questions in detail would occupy an altogether disproportionate amount of space. In the present chapter we can only offer a somewhat rapid sketch; but, such as it is, it seems necessary to the proper working out of our general theme.

A preliminary question arises in regard to the arrangement of the material. By what method and on what principle are religions to be classified? Older classifications, like that of Hegel, are too much biassed by speculative ideas, and in the light of modern knowledge are out of date. More recently, Siebeck, in his *Religionsphilosophie*, divides religions into Primitive Religion, Morality-Religion, and Redemptive Religion. But the division is bound up

with a particular theory of the nature of religion which is at least arguable, and the line of demarcation between Morality-Religion and Redemptive Religion is by no means clear.[1] Tiele has contented himself with the broad distinction between Nature Religions and Ethical Religions. In theory the distiction is plain, but in practice the boundary between natural and ethical religion is not readily defined. The two shade into one another; and Tiele's classification involves the grouping together of much material of a somewhat heterogeneous character under the general description of "ethical religion." On the whole it is better to follow a mode of division suggested by the historic evolution of religion itself. There are two critical points in the historic development of the religious consciousness: the transition from tribal to national religion, and the transition from national to universal religion. This seems to be the simplest and clearest method of arrangement, and it has the advantage of being true to the Platonic principle of dividing the body at the natural joints. In following it we are not calling on the reader to make assumptions beyond what are justified by the facts themselves. Accordingly I begin this survey by an examination of the body of beliefs and practices which are fitly grouped together under the general designation of tribal religion.

In order to gain a satisfactory view of the phenomena of tribal religion, it will be convenient to commence with a statement of

(a) *Primitive Religious Ideas.*

In the previous chapter we saw that the origin and the form of man's religious ideas could not be explained from the side of his environment. Stimulus from the environment there was, but the specific character of religious conceptions was due to the reaction of the mind. Involved in this mental reaction and working through it there are

[1] The principle which underlies and determines Siebeck's classification is, that the essence of religion is *Weltverneinung*.

two principles. In the first place, there is the animistic conception of the world, a conception not in itself religious, but forming the basis on which religious ideas are developed. And then there is the life-experience of the human individual, which prompts the movement of the whole self towards a divine object conceived as ministering to the needs of the subject. Neither the animistic nor the experiential factor acts independently, but both meet and coalesce in the beginnings of religion. The term animism, it should be said, requires to be clearly defined, for it is sometimes used loosely alike for the belief that external things are possessed of a life akin to man's, and for the belief in spirits everywhere present in nature. The latter is a somewhat more advanced notion, and can be distinguished from the mere endowment of natural objects with life. Spiritism proceeds on the assumption that a spirit possesses or uses the object as its instrument. Tiele has denied that there was any nature-worship apart from Spiritism, but it is possible there was a veneration of natural objects and forces simply because they seemed to man to be alive like himself. Traces of a worship addressed to concrete things are to be found among the Finns and Samoyedes; and among the peoples of classical antiquity vestiges of an original worship of rivers and of the element of fire survived.[1] Recently the question has been raised whether there was not a pre-animistic stage of religion,—a stage where a vague awe of the supernatural prevailed, and that independently of any personification of elements in nature or the attribution of souls to things.[2] The primeval man, in presence of the moving spectacle of nature, conceived to be the expression of living power, felt an awe in which fear, wonder, and reverence were mingled. So it is argued, and it is not unlikely. But if man did

[1] A. Réville's *Religions des Peuples non civilisés*, vol. ii. p. 181 ff.

[2] By E. Clodd and R. R. Marett. *Vid.* the paper of the former, "Pre-animistic Stages in Religion," *Transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religions*, and the Preface to the book of the latter, *The Threshold of Religion*, 1909.

pass through this stage, he was not yet religious: religion was only in the making. For this psychical experience is a blended whole, and it must undergo differentiation ere religion in the proper sense can be said to be present. Religion postulates a conscious relationship and a distinction of factors, and vague feeling must advance to a conception of objects able to affect man for good or evil before the religious bond can come into being. The recognition of a constant relation to powers who can do for man what he cannot do for himself is involved in the idea of religion, and psychical experience which has not reached this conception is sub-religious.

The religious significance of Animism is, that man fits the object for its religious function by endowing it with a soul like his own. But between the deification of things in nature like river and cloud, tree and sun, and the conception of them as possessing a soul, there is no hard and fast distinction. Even the instinctive endowment of an object with power is to invest it with a rudimentary soul. To attribute a soul to it is only to define more clearly in terms of man's own experience the power which works within it. An elementary distinction of inner and outer has now begun to develop, which, when applied to the object, tends to make it more suitable for reverence. The soul, there is little reason to doubt, was at first thought to be bound to the object, and only able to work through it.[1] The great body of evidence which bears on animistic nature-worship shows that it was essentially connected with a belief in souls operating in the things which attracted man's curiosity and wonder or excited his fear.

What particularly moved man to the selection of objects for reverence was the idea that they had power to help or to harm him. There is no reason to suppose that the so-called 'minor nature-worship,' *i.e.* the worship of local objects like trees, stones, and springs, was developed before man was attracted to worship the greater powers of

[1] Wundt, in his *Völkerpsychologie*, conceives the 'free' soul to be a development from the 'bound' soul. *Vid.* Bd. ii. pt. 2, p. 1 ff.

nature, such as sun and moon, stars, clouds, and wind. What does seem evident is, that the cult of local objects soon came to preponderate in tribal worship, and this, perhaps, because it was linked more readily with those magical practices which are as old as religion itself. The tokens of an extremely widespread and once vigorous cult of local objects are to be found far and near, among Semitic as well as among Aryan and Turanian races; and they can still be traced in the beliefs and superstitions of the people even in highly civilised lands. Veneration of animals appears to be as old as the worship of natural objects and forces, and no doubt the two existed side by side. More especially did those animals which impressed early man as uncanny, or which were dangerous, become the objects of his worship. Among the former the snake was prominent, and serpent-worship has prevailed in many parts of the world. It flourished greatly in India and America. Among the Negroes of Benin the python is revered. Of dangerous animals we find the crocodile reverenced in ancient Egypt, and among the Malays the worship of the tiger is common. It is not easy to say in some cases what led to the selection of a particular animal, but a creature which seemed mysterious or inspired fear naturally invited propitiation. And if we deem it strange that worship should be addressed as readily to a tree or stone as to a serpent, we have to remember that the primitive mind drew no distinction in principle between the one and the other. The curiously shaped stone, the fruit-bearing tree, and the fierce animal which threatened his life, might each appear to the savage well deserving of reverence, the first for the secret properties it possessed, the second for the good things it gave, and the last for the hurt it might do.

The process which transformed general animistic beliefs into a fully fledged Spiritism may be conceived as follows: The essential point was the liberation of the 'bound soul,' in other words, the gradual loosening of the tie which linked the soul to a particular object or local habitation.

This accomplished, the soul became a spirit freely moving. The key to this transition is found in man's psychical experience: the dream-consciousness played a great part in liberating the soul from bondage to the particular thing. The primitive mind had no idea of a purely illusory experience, just as it had no notion of a soul which was not in some sense material. The only interpretation primitive man could put upon his dreams was, that his soul or second self had for the time being left his body and roamed at large in the world. He awoke where he lay down, but in the interval his soul had been abroad on strange adventures. His belief that his soul or double could detach itself from his body found confirmation from other sources. In his dreams the spirits of his absent companions or his dead kinsfolk appeared to him, a proof that they too possessed a second self that could be absent from the body. Even the shadow of himself, now accompanying him on his way and anon mysteriously vanishing, was evidence to him that he had a freely moving and finer self. On the principle, then, that his own soul could leave his body, primitive man conceived animated things to be possessed of spirits who dwelt in them for the time being, and used them as their instruments. The spirit might desert the tree or the spring and return to it again. So man peopled his world with a host of spiritual beings, who could be approached and reverenced through the material things in which they made their dwelling, but who were themselves invisible. Spiritism marks an advance on mere Animism, and implies a development of the idea of soul. The existence of a pre-spiritistic stage is a legitimate inference; but Ethnology supplies us with no direct evidence of tribes who stood at a lower level than Spiritism. Some of the lowest races known, for instance the native Australians, the Fuegians, and the Bushmen of South Africa, are fully developed spiritists. The lower stage, represented by the 'bound soul,' is a psychological inference.

It is sufficiently clear that Fetishism is not the lowest

form of religion, as some have supposed, but is the outcome and expression of a fully articulated Spiritism. A fetish may be a stock or stone, a claw or even a detached bit of a human body: the essential point is the belief that it has mysterious powers which are due to the presence of a spirit within it. Between the fetish and its spirit there is, however, no inner connexion: the spirit is capriciously present in the object and it may desert it, when the thing will lose all its magic efficacy. Arbitrarily selected, the fetish is readily discarded by the fetish-worshipper: the West African negro, for example, flings the fetish away which obstinately refuses to work. The background of Fetishism is always a well-developed Spiritism, and fetish-worship is an attempt on man's part to control the spirits for his own purposes. Fetishism is intimately allied to Magic: it signifies the preponderance of the magical element in religion, and also denotes the diversion of an existing religion into wrong lines. Fetishism is a deterioration, not a development; it means that man will not recognise that he must remain dependent on higher Powers, but seeks to compel them to subserve his wishes. Consequently, when the cult of the fetish plays a dominant part, the power of a religion to evolve fresh spiritual ideas fades and dies.

Though Spiritism readily gives rise to Fetishism, it also develops in higher and more fruitful ways. Spiritism is a stage through which religion everywhere has passed, for its traces are world-wide; and there must be some link of connexion between it and other forms of primitive belief. Let us note at present that the doctrine of spirits soon receives extended application, for it becomes to the savage a way of explaining the mysterious and the fearsome. He freely invokes the ubiquitous spirits to account for what he does not understand. To his rude imagination "millions of spiritual beings roam the earth": they haunt the mountain tops, the waters, and the forest trees, and they have become familiar to a later age under the names of oreads, nymphs, and dryads. Disease was a mystery to

the savage, and was explained as possession by a spirit. Disease-spirits figure largely among the Malays, Dyaks, Malagasy, and African negroes, with the consequent development of appropriate means of extracting and expelling them. The malicious sprite had its counterpoise in the guardian spirit, the good genius who accompanies a man through life. And a man himself, preferably a chieftain or a king, was sometimes regarded as a spirit clothed in human attributes, and was credited with superhuman powers.[1]

After this brief reference to the development of Spiritism we turn to consider its relationship to Ancestor-worship and to Totemism. These specific manifestations of religion have been sometimes thought to be outgrowths independent of spirit-worship, though showing a connexion with one another.[2] The evidence, however, is decidedly in favour of the priority of Spiritism, and Totemism certainly cannot be shown to have been universal. The cult of the spirits of ancestors is undoubtedly old, but it is a specific application of Spiritism and presupposes it. Indeed, a superstitious fear of the spirits of the dead runs through all the lower culture, and is found in the rudest societies. Fear of the ghost has left its impress on many burial customs, which show, in a crude fashion, attempts to neutralise the power of the ghost to do harm.[3] But the deliberate worship of ancestors is something higher than

[1] Dr. J. G. Frazer, in his *Golden Bough*, has made much of 'divine kings' as spirit-incarnations. On the sanctity of kings and the magical powers attributed to them by the Malays, Mr. W. W. Skeat gives interesting information in his *Malay Magic*, 1900, p. 23 ff.

[2] Fustel de Coulanges, in *La Cité Antique*, regards the worship of spirits in nature and the spirits of ancestors as equally primitive sources of religion. Pfleiderer (*Religionsphilosophie*, 1896, p. 27) asks if Totemism may not be the common root of both. There can be little doubt that the answer must be in the negative. To suppose that Totemism is the oldest form of religion is, as Eduard Meyer remarks, "a complete misapprehension of the actual facts." *Elemente der Anthropologie*, p. 110.

[3] Cp. Rohde's *Psyche*, p. 22 ff. Fear of the spirit has been held to explain the custom of burning the bodies of the dead. For another view, see Ridgeway's *The Early Age of Greece*, 1901, vol. i. p. 534 ff.

this superstitious terror, and presupposes some basis in family and social feeling, some sense of the unity and continuity of the clan or tribe. None the less it seems to be true that savage peoples may believe in ancestral spirits without actually worshipping them. There is evidence for this among the Central Australian tribes and West African negroes.[1] At the same time it is difficult to draw a line between fear or respect and the reverence which expresses the attitude of worship. In any case Ancestor-worship is widely diffused, and the feeling which prompted the members of the tribe and family to trace their security and well-being to the guardian spirits of their ancestors is easily intelligible. In the religions of China and ancient Rome the cult of ancestors has left its mark on the whole religious life of the people.

Totemism is a phenomenon which, in its religious aspect, is allied to Ancestor-worship, and has been found in various parts of the world, *e.g.* in North America, Africa, and Australia. The totem is a species of animal, and occasionally a species of plant, whose life is conceived to be bound up with the life of the tribe, and to be closely linked with the well-being of the social whole. The totem, which in some cases is an individual animal, is the visible embodiment of the unity of the society, and its life is mysteriously connected with that of all the members of the group. The totem is treated as a sacred animal; it may not be killed or eaten except on solemn and sacramental occasions; and it is commonly venerated as a divine ancestor who, in the remote past, brought the group into existence.[2] With Totemism there are associated ceremonies of initiation into the tribe, various taboos, and the

[1] Spencer and Gillen (*Northern Tribes of Central Australia*) say the Central Australians attribute superhuman powers to the spirit-ancestors, but do not seek their help or try to propitiate them (pp. 490–491). Miss Kingsley, in her *West African Studies*, says West Africa has not deified ancestors (pp. 131–134).

[2] Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.*, report that while the totem is only eaten by the Arunta and Kaitish tribes at a sacred ceremony, with the tribes to the north of the Kaitish it is not even eaten ceremonially.

practice of exogamy. These practices are not in themselves necessarily religious, and it is possible that Totemism in some cases is a social custom rather than a religion. Among the African Bantu tribes, for example, the totem is said not to be worshipped. By primitive man totemistic rites are invested with magical significance: they may be a means of increasing the food supply of the tribe, and the totem itself is a magical protector. The religious importance of Totemism lies in the social motive which works behind it. Animism and Spiritism are individualistic in their origin; they are developed out of the experience of individuals: but the explanation of the totem is the felt unity of the group, that kinship of blood and life of which it is the visible token and guarantee. The religious significance of the totem implies the social significance of religion. Totemism is not a universal stage of religious development; but where it flourishes it fosters the growth of higher religious ideas: it lends a religious sanction to tribal loyalty and mutual obligation.[1] "By establishing an essential kinship between man and the object of his reverence, and by realising a fellowship between all the members of the tribe in religious rites, it contains, though no doubt in a primitive and quite magical fashion, the germ of mystic and sacramental religious forms."[2]

Spiritism as a religion has well-marked limits, and Tribal Religion has not succeeded in decidedly transcending these limits. In the higher forms of Tribal Religion the spirits begin to be organised and to receive special functions or departments: there are spirits of vegetation, of disease, ancestor spirits, and such like. The original sphere of their operations comes to be extended. For example, the spirit of the tree, the mountain, and the spring is expanded into and supplemented by spirits of the forest, the earth,

[1] The fact that animals are sometimes associated with the gods of a national religion, as in Egypt and Greece, does not necessarily prove that the nation passed through a totemistic stage: it may only point to a primitive animal-worship.

[2] De la Saussaye, *Religionsgeschichte*, 3rd ed. vol. i. p. 15.

and the sea. Tribal worship in this way reveals a certain advance on crude animism; for it posits a supersensuous world of spirits projected beyond the world of sense-perception. But it does not decisively develop beyond this stage. Certain rude conceptions of a Supreme Spirit are indeed found among uncivilised peoples. Dim ideas of a great god are found among the North American Indians, the Zulus, the tribes of South Eastern Australia, and in West Africa. These great gods, where they are not due to civilised influences, may be best explained as the product of the native mind working on the principle of analogy.[1] The chieftain or leader of the tribe has his counterpart in the realm of spirits. The important point is that the great god never enters decisively into the tribal worship, nor prevails against the cult of spirits. The inquirer who asks the reason for this gets the sufficient answer, "Why should we care for him, he does not help or harm us?" The reply reveals both the secret and the weakness of Tribal Religion.

(b) *Magic and Religion.*

We have already referred to the existence of magical ideas alongside religion, and to the presence of magic in religious rites and ceremonies. And we cannot help asking, What is the origin of Magic, and how is it related to Religion? In its nature, magic is an attempt on man's part to compass his ends by mysterious or occult means. Like religion, it presupposes Animism: it proceeds on the idea that there is an affinity between man and things, in virtue of which these may be influenced and made to subserve human purposes. Magic and religion have at least this in common, that they both aim at satisfying human needs, though they seek to do so by different methods. The

[1] *Vid.* Spencer and Gillen, *op. cit.* p. 491 ff.; Howitt, *Native Tribes of South Eastern Australia*, 1904, p. 488 ff. In his book on *The Todas*, 1906, Dr. Rivers cites the case of the Toda goddess, Teikirzi, who has been elevated to an omnipresent and invisible spirit. *Vid.* p. 186.

problem is whether religion or magic is the original development. It has sometimes been supposed that magic was the secondary product, and was a deterioration from an existing religion. Like Fetishism, it is a perversion of religion, an attempt on man's part to gain by stealth what he cannot win by worship. There is at least this to be said for the theory, that a rank crop of superstitious beliefs and practices is a common feature of a decadent religion. What is not proved is that these magical ideas depended for their existence on religious conceptions: they may quite well have had an independent origin, although they had become associated with religion. And in point of fact magic is found beside and mingling with early religion, and that where there can be no talk of religious decadence. It has seemed more plausible to some to invert the order of development, and to derive religion from magic. Dr. J. G. Frazer's attempt—in the second edition of his *Golden Bough*—to explain the rise of religion as due to the failure of magic is well known; but stated in this form the theory can, I think, be refuted. The discredit of magic is certainly not a condition of the birth of religion: the two constantly exist side by side, and religion frequently deteriorates in the direction of magic. Nor is there any evidence of such a sense of the failure of magical practices as is here suggested existed in primitive culture. Even if there had been such a failure it is hard to see how it could originate religious ideas, though it might stimulate them if they were already present. The derivation of religion from magic has, however, been put in a form less open to criticism. The system of magic, it may be said, dominates the acts and ways of thought of all primitive peoples, and out of the system of magic the body of ideas and usages has grown which we comprehend under the name of religion.[1] As an account of the outward process which marked the genesis of religion, there is not so much to object to in this statement: but if we take it to mean that magic is the sufficient reason of religion, it is open to serious objection. For there is that

[1] The statement is that of Eduard Meyer, *op. cit.* p. 92.

in the psychological nature of religion which magic does not explain: there is a specific difference between the religious and the magical standpoint which precludes us from finding the germ of religion in magical practice. The difference might be put thus: the idea of religion is dependence, that of magic is control; the one encourages an attitude of trust, the other an attitude of self-assertion. Though these two standpoints are not sharply separated in primitive culture, they never strictly coincide.[1] And this differentiation, implicit even in the rudest society, becomes increasingly clear and important with the evolution of religion. To put the case briefly: we cannot derive religion from magic, because even the beginnings of religion involve a reaction of the human spirit on experience which is distinct in kind.

Our general conclusion therefore is, that magic and religion are not derivable the one from the other, and both are equally primitive. Alike they have their source in the activity of the human mind as it seeks to find its good in the world, but the ends towards which they strive are ultimately different in character. The close association of magic and religion in early culture will be understood when we remember that both involve an application of primitive causal ideas for the subvention of human needs. Each aims at the bringing about of certain results; and, in the case of savage man, the results desired are much the same in kind, the gain of material goods and the averting of evils. The real difference appears in the methods used to achieve these ends. Primitive magic is a kind of strategy by which the savage imagines he can influence the spirits and bend them to the fulfilment of his purposes. The conceptions which underlie these magical practices are to our minds extremely crude, but they are deeply rooted in the savage mind. They imply, for instance, an indiscriminating identification of a part with the whole, and proceed on the

[1] There seems to be some recognition of this fact in Mr. R. R. Marett's theory that "Magic and Religion are differentiated out from a common plasm of crude beliefs about the awful and occult." *Vid.* the Preface of his *Threshold of Religion.*

naïve assumption that results may be produced by imitating them. Thus any part of a man's body, his hair or nails, for example, if they fall into the hands of an ill-disposed person, may be used to work harm on the original owner. To make an image of an enemy and then to maltreat it is a good way of doing harm to the person represented by the image. Sympathetic magic, the bringing about of what you wish by imitating it, is extremely common among uncivilised peoples. So we hear of attempts to provoke a storm by striking fire, making a din, and scattering water, which are meant to be an imitation of lightning, thunder, and rain. By squirting water from his mouth the negro wizard induces rain. Rites of a sexual character have sometimes been performed in the belief that they had virtue to quicken the fertility of the soil.[1] Among the Malays the assistance of the magician is invoked in agricultural operations and in fishing.[2] Examples might easily be multiplied, but this is not necessary, for the far-reaching vogue of magical ideas in primitive societies is one of the assured results of anthropological research. A multitude of usages—some of which persist in the midst of civilisation—has developed out of the magical view of things. Such are the use of talismans, amulets, and charms; the employment of spells, incantations, and curses; the practices of divination, taboo, and food-restriction. It was natural, too, that the mysterious yet efficacious practice of magic should have passed into the hands of specially qualified persons. The medicine-man and the shaman, the wizard and the witch-doctor, are found throughout the uncivilised world, and their power and influence are symptomatic of the strength of the beliefs which brought them into being. In some cases the sorcerer dominates the community, and works his will through the superstitious fear he inspires. Thus among the Matabele, in Lobengula's time, the witch-doctors were said to be as powerful as the chief, and no one was safe against their mandate.

[1] *Vid.* Dieterich, *Mutter Erde*, p. 93 ff.
[2] Skeat, *op. cit.* p. 57.

Though magic, as we hold, is definitely differentiated in its character from religion, it is none the less true that, the further we reach back into primitive culture, it becomes more difficult to draw a sharp line of demarcation. Magical ideas intertwine themselves with usages which are primarily religious, and religious rites may degenerate into something indistinguishable from magical practices. Fetishism, for example, though it is commonly treated as a phase of religion, is a form of spiritism so impregnated with magical ideas, that it might be treated as belonging to the province of magic rather than to the province of religion. A fetish which is contemptuously cast aside when it no longer fulfils its owner's demands, is hardly even a divinity in the making. In general, the more the objects of worship remain vague and undefined, the less of individual character which attaches to them, the more readily do they become associated with ideas which are magical in their essence. The spirit is capricious, and man wants to bridle its caprice for his own ends: so, by a natural movement of the mind, the words which were used to invoke its help are by and by transformed into a magic spell which exercises a mysterious compulsion. Similarily, the rude sacrifice acquires an occult virtue which can procure the good desired. The sacred ceremony of eating the totem animal may become a magical means of bringing benefit to the tribe. Among the Australian Arunta we hear of a sacramental eating of the totem in order to increase the food supply—an illustration of a religious rite which is at the same time a potent magic. Among primitive peoples the eating of the divine animal, which is itself a form of communion with the god, is naturally linked with belief in the magical virtue of the rite. But while magical notions become closely intertwined with religious acts, they have a wider range. They tend to spread themselves over the whole face of tribal society; especially in the practice of taboo they lend a mysterious sanction to social custom,—a sanction rooted in the fear of the consequences which a breach of the restriction would entail.

The problem of the bearing of magic on religion is important, and must be faced by any one investigating the origin and nature of religion. A fateful significance attaches to the way in which the relationship works out in the history of a religion, for on this depends whether progress will ensue or retrogression. When religion succeeds in maintaining its independence and retaining its specific character, then, despite the intrusion of magical ideas into the cult, the path of development is open, and the evolution of higher religious ideas is practicable. On the other hand, magic may interweave itself so closely with religion, clinging to religious beliefs and rites, like the ivy round the stem and branches of the tree, that the life of religion itself is sapped. Religion then degenerates into a mass of superstitions, and is encircled by an atmosphere of suspicion, fear, and mistrust: in such an air the germs of what is high and holy perish, and worship at the best becomes an instrument by which man thinks to control nature in his own interests. Under such a system, man may indeed be driven to do or to abstain from doing from fear; he will not be encouraged to be loyal to higher powers. A religion moving in this direction becomes destitute of those purifying and uplifting influences which are the best gifts of human faith. The preponderance of magic, therefore, means the deterioration of religion. But while magic is in no case absent from tribal society, there are differences in the extent to which it is practised and the degree of influence it exercises. The community which keeps magic in subordination to religion, is best adapted to enter on the path of spiritual development.

(c) *The Main Features of Tribal Religion.*

We may now try to put together the chief points about Tribal Religion, and to draw some general conclusions in regard to it. At the outset it is important to keep in mind the nature of the causal conception which lies behind the primitive *Weltanschauung*, and is implied

in savage magic and religion. This conception is arbitrary, as we should term it, and proceeds by a free application of the principle, *post hoc ergo propter hoc.* Tiele relates how a Siberian tribe which had lately seen a camel for the first time, was visited by an epidemic of smallpox: the camel was straightway regarded as the cause of the outbreak of disease. The case is typical of the freedom with which barbarous man translates temporal conjunction into causal connexion. Fancy, prompted by interest and feeling, assigns a cause, and the savage has no sense of the need of trying to show that the cause assigned is such as can bring about the effect. When spiritism or polydæmonism is rampant, man believes himself surrounded by subtle and incalculable influences; and it is part of the conception of a spirit that its working is not fully explicable. The savage translates what he does not understand into an action of spirits which is equally unintelligible. Sickness and frenzy, trance and hysteria, are explained through possession by a spirit. The negro interprets the cure of a disease by medicine, by saying that the spirit of medicine expels the spirit of disease. Hence primitive man's gods never explain things in our sense of the word "explain"; and this because primitive thought is untroubled by the need of finding connexion and coherency within experience. In consequence of the same uncritical attitude of mind, the definite divisions and distinctions drawn by civilised man between the various objects of his experience do not exist for the savage, and things are blended together in what seems to us an extraordinary confusion. The organic and the inorganic, man and animal, mind and matter, are fused together and treated as if there were no essential distinctions between them. Man may spring from an animal, the spirit of a tree may become incarnate in a human being; and stories of strange metamorphoses are widely current among uncivilised tribes, and are received and repeated without incredulity.

It is in keeping with this fusion of the material and

the spiritual that the gods of tribal religion are not spiritual beings in our sense of the word: they are more or less materially conceived, and cannot dispense with some local habitation. The savage idea of soul is that of a thinner, less substantial body: it is a shadowy double or second self which locates itself in the body. Though spirits come to be conceived as invisible and freely roaming, yet they only operate through a material organ or instrument, and have to be localised in order to be invoked. At the stage of tribal religion, man has not really liberated himself from the necessity of finding and embodying the object of his religious belief in some perceived thing. The idea of a pure spirit, completely elevated above sensuous conditions, is a notion which transcends the grasp of the primitive mind. This inability to comprehend what is ideal, save through a material envisagement, is curiously illustrated in totemism. The totem stands for the unity of the social group, the solidarity of the tribe. Primitive thought was here struggling with the idea of a unity which is realised in a multiplicity of parts, but which is something more than the external addition of part to part. This conception of a unity realised in an inner connexion of members, is too subtle and intangible for the savage; he is compelled to use for a substitute an external and material symbol. The totem as the embodiment of the unity of the tribe is the material image of what defies presentation to the senses. Here is an illustration of the necessity under which early society was laid of thinking the spiritual in terms of the material.

The crudeness of early thinking has its counterpart in the crudeness of the motives which moved man at this low stage of development. Man's desires can never be better than the needs of which he is conscious; and at the tribal level he was engaged in a constant struggle with nature and in a recurring warfare with other tribes. Hence the goods he sought through religion were the reflexion of the wants of his daily life. What these wants were we can infer, and the prayers addressed to the spirits

tell us directly. "Pity me," cried the Redskin, "I am very poor; give me what I need; give me success against my enemies. May I be able to take scalps, to take horses." Or again, "Let me live, not be sick, find the enemy . . . kill a great many of him." "Compassionate father," says the Papuan, "here is some food for you; eat it; be kind to us on account of it."[1] Tribal sacrifices are pervaded by a like strain of selfish interest. Whether the sacrifice is a gift or an act of homage to the spirits, it is offered in the hope of procuring some tangible good or of averting some pressing ill. *Do ut des*, or *do ut abeas*: the worshipper gives that the good spirit may give him something good, or that the malignant sprite may take itself off. Tribal Religion is indeed not entirely limited to this selfish and material frame of mind, but it is deeply penetrated by it.

With the foregoing aspect of primitive religion there is closely connected its exclusiveness. The conception of a religion which he should share with all surrounding tribes would appear foolish, and even unmeaning, to the barbarian. Its gods belong to the tribe, and the tribe to its gods; and it was a commonplace in early culture, that to go among strange peoples was to go among men who "served other gods." Hence when an individual was received by initiation into another tribe, he became *eo ipso* a sharer of all the religious beliefs and practices of that tribe. The structure and character of tribal religion lends itself to this exclusiveness. Where the idea prevails that the god is the progenitor or ancestor of the group, the religious bond is naturally restricted to the group. Again, it is not the worship of the greater powers of nature, which have a sort of physical universality, that is dominant in the religion of the tribe: it is the worship of things in the environment, of spirits that have a local habitation there, which preponderates. And such objects of reverence are not readily shared by men whose haunts are elsewhere. The tenacity with which the tribe clings to its religion is remarkable; and the old beliefs and practices tend to

[1] *Vid.* Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. ii. p. 364 ff.

persist even amid great changes in the environment and in the constitution of society. This exclusiveness must be reckoned one of the intractable elements which impede the development of higher forms of religion. And the forces of tradition, sentiment, and habit make the tribal mind inhospitable to the reception of fresh religious ideas.

A further characteristic feature of primitive religion is the ill-defined nature of the beings who are worshipped. We cannot speak of them as possessing a concrete and individual character which is revealed in a variety of attributes. At the best they remain shadowy and elusive, known by exercising certain powers, *numina* in the sense of the old Roman religion rather than gods. The only broad distinction which divides the spirits is, that some are propitious to men and others are malignant: some are to be sought, and others to be avoided. The spirits are not nobler and better beings than men, but they are more cunning and powerful. It is an interesting problem how these vague beings were recognised and designated by the primitive mind. That each had its individual name is not credible. The late Hermann Usener's theory, suggested by the Roman *indigitamenta*, has a good deal in its favour.[1] His view was that the spirits were defined by the mode of their activity: they had appellations in the sense of *nomina agentis*. In Usener's opinion, the gods of the undivided Aryans were still at the low level where such modes of designation sufficed. On the latter point I do not offer an opinion; but it seems clear that the spirits of early religion were too deficient in individuality to be designated otherwise than in some such way as Usener has suggested. And this same absence of individuality in the religious object precludes tribal worship from being other than of the most rude and elementary character. There is so little to distinguish one spirit from another, the mode of operation varies so slightly if at all, that there can be nothing specific in the mode of worship. No doubt we find various rites of an elaborate nature performed by

[1] *Götternamen*, p. 273 ff.

uncivilised tribes—initiation ceremonies and dances, for example. But in these cases the significance of the ceremonies is magical much more than religious. The strict attention to detail which marks primitive ceremonial does not proceed from a scrupulous reverence for the spirits, or from a clear sense of the particular rites which a particular class of spirits demands, but is designed to secure the magical efficiency of the rite. The natural affinity of spiritism with magic, and the fascination which magical ideas exercise, usually result in tribal religion becoming penetrated by magical beliefs and acts. The result often is that the religion of the tribe is overlaid and depressed by a weight of superstition, and lacks any purifying and uplifting element. The tribal spirit has not the inner strength and vitality to react against and to free itself from this dominion: and the way to higher development has to be made by the breaking up of that tribal structure which had been so intimately bound up with the early religious consciousness. There are no instances of the evolution of an ethical religion by a tribal group.

So far the picture of primitive religion is somewhat depressing: it seems too feeble to raise man above the sway of crude selfishness or the tyranny of gloomy fears. The truth is that the tribe is too narrow and poor a form of social life to minister to that growth of self-conscious mind which opens out to man a new heaven and earth. We may say that, in its religion, primitive society is engrossed with a content too large for the form in which it strives to express it. From this point of view the break-up of the old is the condition of the rise of the new and better: the dissolution of the tribe in a wider social order was in the end a means of liberating the human spirit. At the same time it would be wrong to suppose that early religion does not contain within it the germs of something better. Even spiritism shows an advance on rude nature-worship by its conception of a supersensuous world of spirits which works through the world of sensible things, but is not identical with it. And if we look away from the colourless beings

who are reverenced to the way in which tribal religion conceives of the religious bond, we can recognise the germs of higher ideas. In encouraging loyalty to the ancestral spirits, or to the god from whom the tribe is descended, tribal religion made for social solidarity and a sense of common obligations. It is in a sense true to say, as Dr. Tylor has said, that "Savage animism is almost devoid of that ethical element which to the educated modern mind is the mainspring of practical religion."[1] But ethical ideas imply a personal development which did not then exist any more than it exists in the child of tender years. Nevertheless, loyalty to the custom which makes for the well-being of the whole is the root from which the ethical spirit develops. In rudimentary form we have here the idea of a norm for human wills which all accept for the good of all. Tribal religion, in so far as it led in this direction, was subserving the cause of spiritual progress. Moreover, in the tribal conception of a blood-bond uniting all the members of the primitive group, there appears the rudimentary basis out of which was to develop the idea of the spiritual brotherhood of the religious society. The line of religious progress lay in transforming the natural into a spiritual relation.

B.—National Religion.

In contrast to the religion of the tribe, the religion of the nation reveals a very great enlargement of the outlook and a significant deepening of the content of the religious consciousness. The growth of the nation involves a widening of man's mental horizon: and the rise of a larger and more complex social order brings about a distinct advance in the personal consciousness. Through interaction with other selves within a wider social system, man makes progress in individuality and knowledge of himself. One important consequence is that religion transcends the old naturalistic limitations, and gains in

[1] *Op. cit.* vol. ii. p. 360.

ethical character. Our first task will be to indicate the nature of

(a) *The Transition from Tribal to National Religion.*

We have already noted the limitations of tribal society. The tribe represented a narrow form of social order, and its isolation cut it off to a large extent from stimuli to development. The tribal life was for the most part a hard and constant struggle for existence against an inhospitable nature and hostile social groups. The material basis of life was too slender and its organisation too precarious to afford an opportunity of cultivating the higher faculties. It is true, as has been pointed out, that man has to gain a stable means of subsistence which delivers him from the fear of immediate want, ere he has leisure to reflect on things and create philosophy. The observation has a bearing on religion as well. If man in the lowest savagery has some sort of religion, it is only on the civilised level that an ethical and reflective religion can develop. So long as man lives from hand to mouth, his religion must be fitful and interrupted, a matter for a special occasion rather than a constant attitude. Man must improve the material conditions of existence before spiritual development can ensue; and this was hardly possible under the conditions of tribal life.

Man at the primitive stage lived by hunting and fishing, and on such wild fruits as he could gather. An important advance was made when he learned to tame and domesticate the wild animals, and to use them for a means of subsistence. Life was less precarious to peoples at the nomadic stage than to primitive tribes; yet nomadic races required large spaces in which to roam with their herds, and their circumstances were not favourable to the development of a stable and complex social order. But the form of life favoured a simple and well-defined type of religion, such as we find among the early Semites and Persians. Under these conditions it was natural for men

to regard as sacred the animals upon which they depended for their subsistence.[1] Yet society had to pass from the nomadic to the agricultural stage before the elements of civilisation could freely develop, and forms of social union ministering to a higher kind of life maintain themselves. When man learned to cultivate the ground and to draw his food supply from it, he secured a stable and plentiful means of support, and this made possible a denser population and a more highly organised society. Above all, he was delivered from that absorption in the needs of the immediate present which precluded the rise of the reflective spirit. With the emergence of the city and the civic order on earth man came into his proper kingdom, and achieved the fruition of his higher faculties. He could now reveal himself as a being of "large discourse," who was able to look before and after, and to consider the meaning and purpose of his life as a whole. This advance could not but have significant consequences for religion.

How it was that a number of tribes or clans became fused together to form a nation, we do not learn from direct observation; but we can infer with some degree of certainty the process by which it came about. The conservative instincts and self-centred tendencies of early groups were too strong to admit of a spontaneous unification; but what natural affinity could not accomplish, external necessity achieved. Neighbouring tribes would sometimes be forced to combine to avert destruction at the hands of a common enemy. More often probably a strong and vigorous tribe extended its bounds and imposed its rule on adjacent tribes. And what was at first a loose federation of groups under a dominating group would gradually be consolidated by pressure from without. An order, in the first instance, superimposed on the units, was by and by freely accepted and developed from within; and so the nation came into being. The evolution of a nation out of a variety of tribal elements is

[1] Cf. Robertson Smith, *Religion of the Semites*, p. 296 ff.

well illustrated by ancient Egypt and by Rome. The growth of the nation meant a large expansion of human interests, a greatly increased differentiation of functions, and a corresponding development of the individual consciousness. The regulation of life by immemorial custom became inadequate and was superseded by law: the primitive habit of blood-revenge was replaced by judicial punishment: traditional usages yielded to organised institutions. How fared it with religion in this process of social transformation? A fresh religion, it is certain, did not and could not issue into sudden birth like Athene springing from the head of Zeus. The process of change was gradual. The instinct of the tribe was to cling to its old religion in the midst of the new social order. The power of tradition in religion is marked, and the tribal cults would tend to maintain themselves as long as the clan or group had a recognisable existence within the nation. Even when the outlines of the original group had faded and become lost, it would leave behind it a legacy of religious beliefs and usages which persisted in the minds of the common people long after their original source had been forgotten. Nevertheless, when a number of cults were set alongside each other, a process of assimilation and blending must have taken place; and the god of a conquering tribe would naturally claim allegiance from those who had been subdued. The victorious career of the tribe was itself a testimony that it possessed a greater and better god than its neighbours. At the same time it is easy to see that the main influence at work in creating a national religion was a growing national consciousness, which carried with it new and larger needs and aspirations. National ends and values could find no suitable and adequate expression through tribal cults, crude in their nature and local in their scope and purpose. New wine must be put into new bottles, and the nation had to create for itself a form of religion sufficient for its wants. These wants the old Animism and Spiritism were powerless to supply: the call was for

gods of a more individual character and a more extended dominion. Now imagination could not conjure up fresh deities from the void to meet the needs of the situation. A religion so obviously artificial would have had no chance of surviving. There is no true development without continuity between the new and the old; and if religion was to maintain its influence, its higher forms had to grow out of the lower. This condition was most readily fulfilled by the creation of a polytheistic system on the basis of the greater nature-worship. The reverence of the greater powers of nature had formerly played a part, if not a dominant part, in tribal religion; and in the earlier worship of sun and moon, fire, wind, and water, the rude types for higher deities already existed. In developing its great gods on this basis the nation at once maintained a continuity with older religion, and at the same time secured objects of reverence which could be adapted to its enlarged desires and purposes. For there was a physical universality in the objects selected which made it impossible that any group or section of the people should claim an exclusive right in them, and made it possible for all to worship them.

That development did take place on these lines is sufficiently attested by the polytheistic systems of the greater nations of antiquity. We cannot always determine the precise naturalistic origin of a national deity, but sometimes we can do so. For example, it is clear that the Vedic Agni is a fire-god and the Persian Ahura a light-god. The Babylonian Marduk and the Egyptian Ra are sun-gods; the Greek Zeus and the Latin Jupiter are heaven-gods: the Germanic Odin and the Vedic Indra are storm-gods. In these cases the naturalistic basis served as a nucleus around which religious imagination wove the outlines of a personality. It is not, however, true that every god whose character reveals a connexion with some aspect of nature started on his career in the possession of this feature. The lineage of a god may go back to a point prior to his association with a certain

phenomenon of nature, although this subsequent association became a means of extending his dominion and influence.

The process by which a god acquires new attributes is an important aspect of religious development. An explanation of this amplification may be found in the fusion of local cults with a central cult; for in this case certain of the qualities of the lesser deities are taken over by the greater god. Some of the Egyptian gods who assumed a solar character were originally local gods not connected with the sun; but they came to acquire this connexion, and it enabled them to exercise wider functions. Similarly it was at a later period in his history that the Greek Apollo was identified with Helios; and if we accept Dr. Farnell's conclusions, his primary character is obscure and hard to determine. In like manner the connexion of Artemis with the moon is secondary; she is primarily a goddess of the wild life of nature. But the fact is, that the materials are lacking whereby to trace in detail the ancestry and history of the gods of polytheism. Many of them seem to have been local gods —gods of a conquering group or city—ere they came to reign over wider kingdoms. Examples of the movement by which a god begins with a little domain and ends with a great empire are Marduk the god of Babylon, Ra the sun-god of Heliopolis, and Amon-Ra the god of Thebes, the city which took the lead in the expulsion of the Hyksos. A classical and familiar instance is Athene, the maiden goddess of Athens, who developed with her city and became the embodiment of its power and prestige. It is perhaps well to add that, while many of the gods of national polytheism have a naturalistic basis, it is not so in every case. The most conspicuous example of a god who was never connected with the processes of nature is Brahma, who grew out of the cult and represented the all-availing might of the sacrificial prayer. And it is at least possible that Aphrodite as well as Astarte from the first did not represent a natural process, but an aspect of human life: they are deifications of sensuous

love.[1] The Greek Hestia, with her counterpart the Roman Vesta, the goddess of the hearth-fire, is from the outset a family or a civic deity rather than a natural power. It will be noted, however, that in such cases it is no local object which is elevated to a god: it is something which is capable of being regarded in a general aspect, or which has a universal function.

When a nation is a closely unified whole, its religion will tend to be centralised and to wear a common character. The more rigorously the unity of the people is asserted, the greater will be the stress on uniformity of worship. National life, as it appeared among the Greek city-states or the Germanic races, was that of a loose federation of peoples. In consequence we seldom find that exactly the same gods are worshipped by the different groups, or that the same god has everywhere the same importance. In marked contrast are religions of the highly centralised type, which aim at a common system of belief and worship. Illustrations of this drawn from widely separate fields are the religion of the Incas of Peru and the religion of post-exilic Judaism. Whether a national religion assumes the looser or the stricter form will depend much on social and political conditions. To some extent it will also depend on the intrinsic character of the religion itself: monotheism, for instance, will naturally tend towards unification of worship.

(b) *The Specific Features of National Religion.*

The special characteristics which distinguish National from Tribal Religion may be traced to the higher social order of the nation and the needs which flow from it. The savage can worship the vague and formless spirits: the civilised man demands some better object of reverence.

[1] That Aphrodite was of Asiatic, not of Hellenic origin, is likely. Dr. Farnell suggests, with what probability I cannot say, that she came to Greece from Asia with the character of a deity of vegetation. *Cults of the Greek States*, vol. ii. p. 624.

The increased individuality and the fuller sense of personal character which are developed by interaction among the members of a civilised society make it hard for them to bow down before beings poorer and meaner than themselves. Hence the tendency which accompanies the evolution of the nation to humanise and moralise the gods, and to bring them into close relation with the various aspects of the national life. As already noted, the evolution of society means an increased differentiation of functions within the social whole; and the activities of men fall into broadly marked departments, with the consequent division of the population into classes. Compared with the relative homogeneousness of tribal society, national life is complex: some of the people are devoted to agriculture and others to trade, a certain section is occupied with the administration of justice, another with the conduct of war, and a third with religion. Hence through the development of the State great interests grow up which are the intimate concern of the citizens; and these interests represent social values of far-reaching influence and importance. So provision must be made for their due recognition in the religious life of the State. This provision was not not made by creating new gods, save in special instances, but by extending the powers of older gods and by attributing to them fresh functions. This process is exceedingly common at the stage of development with which we are now dealing, and some illustrations of it will be given afterwards. Meanwhile note that, in virtue of this process, the god acquires additional predicates, his character grows more complex, and his nature becomes more individualised. This work of representing a being with a character revealed in a variety of attributes transcended the limits of the primitive mind: it was made possible by the higher mental faculties of the civilised man, who gave his god a name and was able to combine a diversity of qualities in the unity of a single idea. Provided with a name, endowed with a variety of attributes and offices, and possessing something of a personal character, the

national god was a power between whom and his worshippers personal relations could exist.

One can see that the growing complexity of human activities in the nation might tend to multiply the number of gods, each with a specific duty to fulfil. The old Roman religion was an instance in which this tendency received very full expression; but the needs of worship were hostile to the indefinite multiplication of deities, and the religion of the nation more often shows a counter movement towards integration. The result then is, that the minor gods fall into the background, and the great departments of the national life are brought under the guardianship of a few great gods, who preside over them and become the protectors of those engaged in them. In this process of expansion, through which a god adds fresh aspects to his nature and rules over new kingdoms, his original character as a nature god is so overlaid, that it is sometimes almost, if not entirely, obliterated. We can by no means assume that the feature which has come to be most widely associated with a deity gives us the clue to his primitive nature. Indeed it is easy to see that if the naturalistic origin of a god is transcended, if the basis as a nature power is transmuted into something higher and its cruder features left behind, the god is best qualified to play a distinguished rôle in the national pantheon. Hence it was just because the natural foundation of the old Heaven-god and Earth-goddess was too pronounced to be lost sight of, that they failed to play an effective part in national polytheism. Dyaus and Prithivi, Ouranos and Gaia, Qeb and Nut are dim figures who remain steadily behind the scenes in the Hindu, Greek, and Egyptian world of gods. They never became fully personal beings, recognised and worshipped as such.

Let me illustrate briefly the development of the character of a god under the stimulus of the religious needs of a people. Varuna is one of the greatest gods of the Veda. He originally stood in close relation to nature,

and it is a tempting hypothesis that at first he represented the luminous heaven. In the Vedic Hymns he has become an all-seeing personality, the founder of the moral order of the world, and prayers are addressed to him as just and good and gracious. "He who should flee higher than the heaven, even though he went beyond the end of the world, he would not escape King Varuna." "All things sees King Varuna which are between the heaven and the earth beyond." The Teutonic Odin or Wodan was originally a wind or storm god, and the memory of his primitive character is preserved in the legend of "The Wild Hunt." But he gradually gained higher attributes. In the Eddas he has become the chief god of a warrior race, and is termed the patron of war. He also became the protector of agriculture and the ancestor of races. Moreover, in the north he assumed the rôle of a culture hero and the god of poesy; and he was also believed to rule in the kingdom of the dead. Odin is a good illustration of a great god who has assumed various functions in response to the development of his worshippers. The same may be said of the Greek Apollo. Possibly at first a light-god, he was afterwards associated with Helios, and was ultimately linked with very different aspects of the people's life. At an early date he was the god of agriculture, vegetation, and cattle rearing (*νόμιος*); and at a later time he was known as the god of song, music, and poesy. The arts of divination and healing were likewise put under his protection. In art he came to be the embodiment of the Greek conception of strength and manly beauty of form. Mars is one of the oldest deities of Roman religion, and his name occurs in a primitive hymn of the Arval brothers. Primevally perhaps a god of spring and fertility, he assumed the protection of vegetation, herds, and men, and was honoured for warding off plagues and sickness. At a later time, when the military side of Roman life had developed, Mars became the god of war, and in this capacity he is familiar to us in Roman literature. To take yet another example: the

Egyptian Osiris, the god of Abydos, is one of those deities whose original form has been so overwritten with legend and theological construction, that it is hardly recognisable. Some have thought he was at first a god of vegetation; others, with more likelihood, have suggested that he represented the sun after his setting. At all events he was afterwards made to reign over the kingdom of the dead, and was exalted to a moral power who ruled for good. These illustrations may suffice to indicate the process which the student of religion finds at work in the domain of national religion. The gods slowly part with their naturalistic features as the indomitable spirit of man triumphs over nature, and they gradually acquire a higher content from the values which are being realised in the national life.

The demands of the cultus, as well as the growth of reflexion, prompted thought to carry out the analogy of the social order in the religious sphere, and to bring about a coherent and graduated order among the gods of the nation. It is hard to suppose that a heavenly any more than an earthly state can be well ruled by a number of rival and independent powers:

οὐκ ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη· εἷς κοίρανος ἔστω.[1]

The experience of earth suggests a divine hierarchy in heaven. The Chinese religion illustrates how different religious elements may, in response to this demand, be included and ranked within a system. Supreme over all is the God of Heaven; but the Heaven God has a viceregent on earth, the Emperor, who is the Son of Heaven. Under the Emperor are placed all the gods of earth—the State gods, the spirits of ancestors, and the gods of the soil and crops. In this way each kind of deity finds its station and order in a comprehensive system of which the head is the Emperor, the Son of Heaven, and the visible centre of divine power. And what we find in China we find elsewhere. A simple step towards the organisation of the national pantheon was to bring all the Gods under

[1] *Iliad*, ii. 204.

the sway of a supreme god, who occupied a place analogous to that of a human monarch. This conception, which it is usual to term Monarchianism, can be observed more or less distinctly in several religions. An example is the place of Zeus in Homeric religion, the ruler of gods and men who inflexibly brings his counsel to pass—*Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή*. A feebler counterpart of Zeus is the Capitoline Jupiter of the Roman State religion. A far more striking and well-marked type of Monarchianism is seen in the religion of Israel at a certain point in its development. To the eye of the pious Hebrew, Jahveh is "exalted far above all gods"; "There is none like unto thee among the gods, O Lord." Israel is the most impressive illustration of the movement which carries out Monarchianism to its goal and completion in a monotheistic faith. The strongly marked sense of the sublimity of Jahveh, the clear conception of his righteousness in contrast with human sin, and the idea that religion rested on a covenant between the nation and its God,—all these elements working together in the religion of Israel precluded it from issuing in pantheism. Hebrew religion took a decided step towards universalism when, as the outcome of the prophetic spirit at work within it, it developed a pure Monotheism which left no room even for the existence of other gods. In the heavens and in the earth, Jahveh reigns alone and supreme: "All the gods of the peoples are idols; but Jahveh made the heavens." The supremacy of a single god reaches its true conclusion in the thought that there is no god but the one God.

The tendency to unification, however, sometimes proceeds on another principle and has a different outcome. Instead of selecting one god for exclusive reverence, thought may recognise a divine principle working in and through the world of gods. We recall the Greek *τὸ θεῖον*, and the all-embracing *Μοῖρα* or destiny, to which the gods themselves must submit. In China there appears the idea of Tao, the soul of heaven existing

before all gods and men, the all-governing way which is fulfilled by the steady movement of the orbs above and by the orderly walk of mortals below. In a like fashion the Hindu of the Vedic period saw behind the natural, moral, and religious order the ever-present "Rita," the principle of law which bound all things together. But the movement towards unification comes to more distinct utterance in what has been called the Kathenotheism of the Vedic Hymns. This term signifies that, in the act of worship, one god is supreme to the worshipper, and is invested with the highest attributes. In the Vedic Hymns, Agni, Varuna, and Indra are each in turn exalted to the highest station. At a further stage of the same thought the many gods are recognised to be only the shifting forms of the one and real divinity. Already in the Vedic period the Hindu mind was beginning to realise that "The one remains, the many change and pass"; and the process which by and by created the pantheistic speculation of the Upanishads, and issued in the strict pantheism of the Vedânta, had already entered on its course. That course is continuous throughout. A parallel tendency is disclosed in the ancient religion of Egypt. Here also we see one god exalted in worship to be highest and best, and other divine forms grow faint and unsubstantial. Amon-Ra is thus invoked: "Hail to thee, maker of all beings, lord of law, father of the gods, . . . single among the gods, of many names, unknown in their number." Polytheism was too firmly rooted in the local cults to make the evolution of Monotheism practicable in Egypt. But in the esoteric doctrine of the priests, Henotheism was developed in the direction of a pantheistic world-view. In contrast to Monotheism, Pantheism offers a solution of the religious problem which leaves no room for a genuine religious bond; and this because the difference of worshipper and worshipped is resolved into the colourless identity of the one real Being. The sole office of religion in a pantheistic system would be to lift the veil of illusion, under which the individual

cherishes the belief that he has a being and destiny of his own.

The diverse and sometimes conflicting elements which are at work in the life of a nation, as well as the genius of the people as a whole, are mirrored in the national religion. The temperament of a race and the interests which dominate it, are necessarily reflected in the character of its gods and the spirit of its worship. For the gods are the protectors of the manifold activities of the citizens and the guardians of their fortunes. Especially when the national spirit has come to the full consciousness of itself, and religion is centralised in the cults of the state, do we read in the religion of the nation the moving forces of its history. The Hindu religion reflects the mind of the patient inhabitants of a tropical land, who revolt against a loud and aggressive individualism and turn to thought for satisfaction. The slender sense of personality has made possible the fusion of all forms human and divine in the universal Brahma: "Thou art that": to know this truth is to be delivered from illusion. In the *Bhagavadgita* the Deity tells Arguna, hesitating to join battle, that "He who thinks one to be the killer and he who thinks one to be killed, both know nothing. He kills not, is not killed. He is not born nor does he ever die, nor having existed does he exist no more."[1] The Hellenic religion is the reflexion of a temper and ideals which are in sharp contrast to the Hindu. The clear-cut figures of the Greek gods and goddesses resisted the process of blending in a pantheistic whole: and the fair and graceful forms they received at the hands of the great artists are the expression of that order, measure, and harmony in which the Greek saw the fruition of individuality. When we turn to the Roman world we find a temper more secular and less idealistic, and it is reflected to the full in the Roman religion. With some truth Hegel described the Roman religion as the religion of *Zweckmässigkeit*, or expediency; and the

[1] Telang's translation in the *Sacred Books of the East.*

note of Roman piety was the giving of the gods their due.[1] The gods are mysterious powers to be dealt with by fixed rules, rather than personal beings who claim the devotion of man. Indeed, we might say that the Roman gods remain shadowy and abstract to the end, because the true divinity was on earth, not in heaven. It was the conquering power and the imperial destiny of Rome herself; and of this the figure of Jupiter Optimus Maximus, guarding the Capitol, was the symbol.

It may be useful if we summarise briefly the main features of religion at the national stage.

(1) In contrast to the gods of tribal religion, the gods of the nation have a name and a character, and they are endowed with a variety of attributes and functions. The realisation of religion in the form of a personal relation between worshipper and worshipped now begins to be possible.

(2) The growth of human character in civilised life leads to the acquirement of the moral virtues, and these are now ascribed to the gods. Judged by our own standards, the gods of the nation are often not all that we could wish them to be, but they are certainly better than their distant ancestors were.[2] While the gods at this stage are humanised, they are also idealised: they come to be represented as types of human excellence,—of valour, wisdom, or beneficence. So the national values and ideals are expressed in the gods of the nation, and the character of the gods gives us a clue to the character of the citizens.

(3) Along with the idealisation of the gods of the nation goes the tendency to elevate them above the world. They become less familiar beings, and more the objects of

[1] *Est enim pietas justitia adversus deos* (Cicero, *De Nat. Deorum*). Mommsen has described the Roman attitude to the gods as that of a debtor to a powerful creditor.

[2] In his *Making of Religion* (p. 163), Mr. Andrew Lang says the gods more often deteriorate than improve with the advance of civilisation. The evidences do not bear out this sweeping assertion; and it is connected with the untenable idea that, in the beginnings of religion, a relatively pure monotheism prevailed.

reverence: they are no longer entangled with the things of earth, but dwell in a higher region. The greater gods of Greece haunt no more the groves and trees and springs: they dwell apart and afar on the summit of cloud-capped Olympus. The God of the Hebrew patriarchs who walked the earth and talked with men, to the nation in later days was a Being far exalted above the world, a sublime Presence before whom the nations were as nothing. In this elevation of the national gods above the region of sensible experience, we recognise the endeavour to make the form of the religious object adequate to the growing content of the spiritual life. And it was because national polytheism was inadequate in its forms to man's deepening needs, that it had to give way in turn to a higher faith. The religious spirit, when it grows more profoundly conscious of itself, transcends the limits of the nation and becomes universal in its meaning and claims.

(c) *Sacred Things, Acts, and Persons.*

Tribal religion in its essence is local. The spirits, whether bound or free-moving, operate through objects in man's environment, and are approached by means of these objects. The development of national religion is a process in which the connexion of the gods with nature is gradually loosened. Tradition and sentiment are nevertheless too strong to permit of the local element in religion being speedily discarded; and the tendency is to elevate it in order to bring it into accord with larger ideas. The purification of local religion is made practicable through the idea of symbol. The tree once itself divine, or at least the abode of a spirit, is by and by regarded as sacred to some greater god. One recalls the oak of Dodona sacred to Zeus, but which in a primitive age was the abode of a tree-spirit. The trunk of a tree or a pole fixed in the earth beside the altar or shrine of the god—such as occurred so often in the religion of the Canaanites—is a symbol of the deity and also the memorial of an

older and a cruder faith. Similarly the rough stone planted on a "high place," and itself in an earlier age an object of reverence, is conceived to be the token of the divine presence; and the place where it stands is thought to be consecrated for the meeting ground of the people and their god. From the rough stone with its hallowed associations was developed the rudely hewn image, and this in turn gave place to the carefully made idol. Corresponding to the development of the idol was that of the temple or house dedicated to the worship of the god. The sacred spots, the groves or the high places where men were wont to worship, were by and by provided with shrines in which the image of the god was set up. Out of the shrine, or single chamber containing the idol, the stately temple was evolved as the acts of worship became more complex. The shrine with its image remained the most sacred part of the building: between it and the outer world was interposed the forecourt of the temple through which was the way to the inner sanctuary. So arose stately buildings dedicated to the service of the gods by the Nile, the Euphrates, and the Ganges: and the magnificent house erected to Jahveh in Jerusalem by King Solomon is in the memory of all readers of the Bible. Thus the old sentiment for locality in worship was perpetuated in a higher form through the temple, which became the centre of worship and a powerful means of consolidating religion. Moreover, with the progress of religious ideas the consecrated building, by its forms, arrangement, and ornamentation, was made to convey a wealth of symbolical meaning.

In keeping with the growth of the temple as the centre of worship, national religion shows a marked development in the rites and modes of worship. These assume fixed and elaborate forms, and receive a higher significance in harmony with the desires and needs of the worshippers. From the primitive period, sacrifice and prayer have formed the main element of the cultus. In the religion of the tribe the sacrifice was an act of homage, or a gift to the god in order to win some favour

from him. And the belief that evils could be averted, and good things gained by this means, is still operative in national religion.

> "*Munera, crede mihi, capiunt hominesque deosque,*
> *Placatur donis Jupiter ipse datis*" (Ovid).

In tribal religion we find also the idea of sacrifice as a means of communion between the worshippers and the god.[1] The totem or sacred animal, eaten by the god and his people at a common meal, was supposed to strengthen the bond of union between them: the sacrifice had a sacramental significance. In national religion there is a tendency to remove or soften some of the grosser features of primitive sacrifice. This is done through the method of substitution, the substitute being supposed to retain the efficacy of the original. Human sacrifices, there seems little reason to doubt, were frequent in early times, and among the Semites, Greeks, and Hindus they existed at a later date.[2] The substitution of an animal was at least the indication of the growth of a humaner spirit, though in time of stress there would be an impulse to fall back on the elder and more savage rite. Sacrifice, as an institution in the religion of the nation, has evolved in two directions. In the one case the magical aspect of sacrifice, its mysterious power to constrain the gods, has preponderated. Of this Brahmanism is a notable instance. This tendency conflicts with the development of spiritual ideas; and the new religious movement under Buddha did away with the old sacrificial system. On the other hand, we find a higher development of the sacrificial idea, when stress is laid on sacrifice as a means of strengthening the

[1] Robertson Smith believed this to be the original form of sacrifice. *Vid.* his *Religion of the Semites*, p. 213 ff. In this he has been followed by Pfleiderer, *Religionsphilosophie*, 3rd ed. But the theory suffers from lack of evidence; and it likewise ignores the existence of other motives to sacrifice which must have been operative from the first.

[2] Illustrations from Greece are the custom of hurling a victim from the Leucadian promontory once a year, and the practice of offering two human victims at the festival of the Thargelia.

bond of communion with the god; and more especially when it is regarded as a means of restoring the fellowship of men with the deity which has been marred and broken by sin. This conception of sacrifice comes to clear expression among the Hebrews, though here as elsewhere the inclination grew to magnify the ritual efficacy of the duly performed act. Where, however, there is a deepening of the inward side of the religious consciousness, the inadequacy of any external method of propitiation becomes apparent. Hence the cry of the Hebrew prophets for the purification of the mind and will, for "a clean heart and a right spirit within."

Along with sacrifice naturally goes prayer to the god; and prayer is one of those religious acts which are practised wherever religion exists. It is the instinctive cry of the human soul to a power that can help it in its time of need. We have already pointed out how primitive prayers reflect the temper of primitive religion; and in tribal culture, permeated by magical ideas, prayer is assimilated to the spell and the incantation. In the lower culture, prayer assumes a fixed form of words, and has a mysterious efficiency. In the organisation of national worship the liturgical element is, of course, prominent, and prayers to particular gods run into a stereotyped form of words. These acquire a peculiar sanctity, and they are sometimes scrupulously repeated even when the language in which they were originally spoken has become obsolete. Brahmanism is remarkable for its belief in the power of the rightly uttered prayer to *compel* the gods. "The faithful," we are told, "find Agni when they have recited the spells." It is a curious witness to the persistence of the lower elements out of which a religion has evolved, that in ancient Babylonia, side by side with prayers breathing a lofty spirit, stand others which in essence are magical spells. In prayer the values which prevail in the social system receive articulate expression: men seek from the gods what they most desire for themselves. The religion of the Homeric poems is the religion of an aristocracy,

where ideals of honour and knightly valour prevail, and this temper finds utterance in prayer. Hence the cry of the aged priest to his patron, the god of the silver bow, to avenge the injury done to his servant's honour by Agamemnon. The hero Diomede petitions Athene, the tireless maiden, to grant him to slay the foe who had boasted over him.[1] With the growth of the ethical consciousness, prayer becomes the expression of a desire for higher goods; for men were beginning to realise that they could not live by bread alone. Thus the Persian prayed to Ahura-Mazda for strength to help on the kingdom of righteousness against the kingdom of darkness. And the prayer of Nebukadnezar to Marduk breathes a pure aspiration: "Set in my heart the fear of thy Godhead: grant me what thou deemest best: for thou it is who hast created my life."[2] This longing after the higher values is best set forth in Hebrew and Christian prayer; and with them we may perhaps compare the noble utterance which Plato has put in the mouth of Socrates at the close of the *Phædrus*:—"Beloved Pan, and all ye other nymphs who haunt this place, give me beauty in the inward soul; and may the outward and inward man be at one. May I reckon the wise to be wealthy, and may I have such a quantity of gold as a temperate man, and he alone, can bear and carry."[3] The prophetic spirit of the Hebrew and the philosophic mind of the Greek were agreed in thinking the best man can ask of God is a clean heart and a right spirit.

The evolution of worship in the nation brought about the creation of persons specially qualified, and charged with the care of the offices of religion. We can trace the rude beginnings of this in the medicine-man, the wizard, and the shaman of savage tribes. But it is only with the organisation of temple worship and a system of sacrifices, that an official priesthood comes into existence. Primitive

[1] *Iliad*, i. 37–43 and v. 115–120.
[2] Farnell, *Evolution of Religion*, p. 221.
[3] *Phædrus*, 279 B, Jowett's translation.

society had its sacrifices, yet it was not the prerogative of any special class to offer them: the worshipper himself, in virtue of his membership of the tribe, made his offering to the tribal god. The idea of this original right of sacrifice survived in Israel up to the time of Saul and David, for we read of both these kings offering sacrifice on their own account. With the development of the temple ritual we see the privilege of sacrifice passing into the hands of a close corporation, a hereditary priesthood invested with peculiar sanctity, and supposed to be endowed with special knowledge. In India and Persia, Babylon, Israel, and Egypt, powerful priesthoods grew up, monopolising sacred functions, and exercising great influence on the national religion and life. When religion has a complex ritual, and a belief in its mechanical efficacy prevails, the office of the priest is exalted. On the other hand, in nations where secular and sacred functions are not rigidly separated, and the priesthood is not a close corporation or hereditary caste, the influence and authority of the priests are less. In China and in Rome the priests were also state officials, and the Roman Pontifex Maximus could hold several other offices. In Greece, the fact that the priests did not hold office for life depressed the importance of the priestly class; and when the idea maintained itself that the priests were the representatives of the people, the dominance of the priesthood was not practicable. On the other hand, nowhere has a hereditary priesthood formed a more exclusive caste, or received higher privileges, than is the case in India.

The rise of an organised priesthood is a fact of much importance in the evolution of religion. It secures the continuous performance of the offices of religion and the carrying out of an impressive cultus. And where the priests were qualified by ability and knowledge to instruct and direct the people, they were an influence on society making for good. On the contrary, where the priests were the interested instruments of a superstitious and magical cult, they became a factor in the national life

hostile to spiritual progress. Hence the priests and the prophets were often in sharp antagonism. As a general rule, the growth of a well-organised priesthood within a nation acts as a conservative force on the side of religion. A body of similarly trained men, whose interests are closely identified with the maintenance of an existing system, is not friendly to new ideas: they are naturally opposed to changes which threaten to damage their own position and prestige. Presenting a united front to the spirit of change, they make the progress of reform difficult. Reform, when it does come, comes more often than not through a sharp conflict between the upholders of the old order and the prophets of the new.

The cultus is the vital centre of religion, and the rallying point of religious emotions and sentiments. Moreover, it plays an important part in the development of the character of the gods. A god must be represented before he can be worshipped, but the needs and interests of worship react on the character of the god in the way of giving it clearer definition and more determinate qualities. When a deity is intermittently worshipped, and that in varying forms according to the preference of the individual, his nature will be vague and fluctuating. His attributes will not be the same for each worshipper. But when the cultus is regularly organised, the need arises for uniformity of representation; and the demands of the religious spirit call for a greater fixity and fulness in the conception of the god. On the ground of what is required in the cultus, the attributes of a god have gradually been specified and connected in an individual whole, and the character of the god has gained general recognition.

Though we may not be able to explain why a particular god came to be possessed of particular qualities, we can nevertheless be sure that imagination did not work in a haphazard fashion. The needs of worship, acting as a principle of selection, gave prominence to certain attributes and made them characteristic; and by the constant performance of the cult, they were connected in a more or

less coherent whole by the mind of the people. A well-organised cultus thus becomes an indispensable means of giving fixity to the representations of the gods, and of endowing them with a definite character and individuality.

C.—Universal Religion.

National Religion remains the affair of the nation, and has its vital centre in the official and publicly recognised cult of the gods of the State. Through the organised worship of the gods the national spirit and ideals find expression. The individual shares in this worship not as an individual, but as a citizen; and the religion of the citizen consists in the right and regular performance of those acts of worship which are prescribed and required. What the private opinions of the individual are in regard to religion is not of much concern to the State: it is the acts which count. At this stage of religious development there is little desire to scrutinise the mind of the individual or to test his beliefs: he passes for religious so long as he pays outward respect to the official religion and complies with its demands. Nor is there any desire to identify religious service with the character and conduct of life as a whole. Though National Religion does in some instances rise to higher levels, still in the main it is true that the spirit of externality clings to it; and for this reason it was inadequate to the needs of the religious mind when it became more reflective and conscious of itself. The consciousness of this defect explains

(a) *The Rise of Universal Religion.*

Though the actual birth of Universal Religion is a well-marked and decisive episode in the evolution of the religious consciousness, yet, like every other movement of the human spirit, it was prepared for by what had gone before. A religious environment had been gradually forming which became the medium in which those spiritual

personalities could develop who were to be the leaders and reformers of religion. More than once we have referred to the growth and enrichment of personality which were the outcome of the social life of the civilised state. The citizen, interacting with other citizens and moved by new motives and higher interests, builds up a personal life and develops a character for himself. This deepening of personality is of momentous importance to religion, for it means that man becomes a centre of religious experience and evolves a spiritual life of his own. The monotonous uniformity of early society begins to pass away, and in religion, as in other things, man differentiates himself from those about him. With the development of the inner side of religion, man gradually comes to realise that the naturalistic ideas and the external acts by which existing religion expressed itself are no longer sufficient. Inward feeling and individual conviction must somehow find utterance in religious beliefs and worship: the new content of personal life must gain a form in which to realise itself in the religious sphere. We do not suggest that this feeling was simultaneously experienced by individuals, and moved them in the same degree. That is not so; for there will always be many who are the children of tradition and custom, and to whom change is distasteful. But social development had made possible a new fulness of spiritual experience, and this spirit first found utterance in men of marked personality and genius. Standing like watchers on an eminence apart, they had the vision of a better order of things while the world beneath was still careless and unheeding. And what they had seen in vision they told with inner conviction as a message for the age. The knowledge gained by insight was matured by reflexion, and it became a word in season for the men of the time, a word sent forth with the power and persuasiveness which proceed from vivid perception and personal experience. This phenomenon was something altogether fresh in the religious history of man. The personal factor which underlies all spiritual development was asserting

itself, and, like a process of fermentation once set up, it worked effectively and produced great changes. In this way the conception of the religious relationship was gradually spiritualised and reconstituted, so that it could serve as a basis for Universal Religion.

The movement of which I have been speaking may be broadly termed prophetic, for it had its source in the teaching of gifted and inspired individuals. These prophetic figures have appeared in various nations and at different times, giving articulate utterance to the needs and aspirations which had been slowly forming within the national life. It is significant that these prophetic voices do not proceed from the circle of the priests: as a rule the priestly class is linked too closely by habit and interest to the official religion to recognise that the demand is urgent and the time ripe for a new spiritual development. The servant of an institution is seldom its dispassionate critic, and a truer judgment is often reached from a detached standpoint. The prophets arise from the ranks of the people, lonely and commanding figures whose eyes pierce the veil of appearances, and whose lips speak the things they know. They signalise the advent and the power of the personal factor in religion, the principle destined to play so important a part in higher religion. Speaking roughly, we may say that the period from the eighth to the sixth century B.C. is more especially the era of prophetic religion. It is curious and significant that during this epoch a wave of religious influence seemed to pass over peoples widely separated in space, and fresh spiritual impulses broke into life with far-reaching consequences. The eighth century B.C. saw the rise of the great prophets of Israel, and they stand at the beginning of a movement which was to continue to the time of the Exile. Considerably earlier than the rise of the prophetic movement in Israel there had appeared the founder of the Persian religion, Zarathustra, a real personage who lifted the religion of his people to a higher level, and was an enduring influence in their religious development. Then, in the sixth century B.C., Confucius taught

in China, and Buddha stept forth to preach his new gospel in India. The same century saw the appearance of the Orphic movement and the Mysteries in Greece. Perhaps it may be thought that we are straining the meaning of the term when we seek to bring these latter developments into line with the prophetic; and no doubt the Greek Mysteries and the preaching of the Hebrew prophets differ widely in meaning and purpose. Nevertheless, Orphism has this in common with the religious movement of which we are speaking, that it accentuated the individual side of piety and was a reaction against the traditional conception of religion. It found its way into Greece at a time when faith in the Homeric gods had been shaken, and it sought to supply a want which the earlier religion had ignored. Man, conscious of himself as a centre of value, begins to have forward-looking thoughts which go beyond this world: what has religion to say of this? The heart of Orphism was its faith in the immortal power and destiny of the human soul; and by its "revelation" (ἐποπτεία) it strove to fill its adherents with the strength and assurance of the life to come. This was something individual; and the Greek Mysteries disclose the significant process of religious societies forming *within* the nation, membership in which was voluntary and open to all. This was one of several signs which can be detected here and there among the nations, that the old and time-honoured conception of religion was beginning to break down. Religion hitherto was in essence a social function, whether of a tribal group or of a nation, and the individual's relation to it was naturally determined by his membership in the community. The better minds of the race were now feeling that religion must mean more to the individual than this. Man was becoming conscious of a personal character, and his desire was turning towards a personal destiny distinct from that of the nation of which he was a citizen. On the whole, National Religion, with certain exceptions, had said little about a life hereafter, and the notion of another world had remained shadowy and ineffective. The living and

operative motive was the nation and its destinies on earth. The growth of the personal and prophetic spirit liberated new ideas and interests, which worked to bring about another and a deeper way of regarding the world and life. Prophetism, conceived in the sense indicated, did not indulge in cosmic speculation, nor did it make any deliberate and sustained attempt at theological construction. It was rather a new spirit which purified and vitalised existing religious conceptions; and its essential theme was teaching about life, its meaning and its end. This teaching had its source and inspiration in the subjective side of the religious relation: it proceeded from a personal consciousness of what religion ought to be.

We may illustrate this process from the prophetic movement in Israel which began in the eighth century B.C. The leaders of this movement did not create a religion: they set out from the earlier faith of Israel, but they purified and ennobled it by infusing into it a new ethical spirit. Isaiah, Amos, and Hosea were men who spoke out of the fulness of an inner experience: they were possessed by the consciousness of a mission they must fulfil and a divine word they had to communicate. They were constrained to protest against the sensuous and impure conceptions of Jahveh which prevailed in the popular mind, and to denounce the exaggerated importance attached to religious ceremonies and sacrifices. As they looked and mused, the fire burned within them, and they spake with their tongue. From of old Jahveh had been the "Holy One of Israel"; but while the people loved to think first of Jahveh as the God of the nation, the prophets proclaimed His holiness with impressive earnestness. Jahveh was a righteous God, and His will was an ethical law: hence righteousness of spirit accompanied by obedience to the divine will was the true service and sacrifice of man. "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire . . . I delight to do thy will, O my God! yea thy law is written within my heart."[1] This ethical conception of God was in

[1] Ps. xl. 6–8.

principle a monotheistic faith, and it carried with it the idea that piety of heart, revealed in obedience of life, was the duty God required of man. In moving forward to this large and enlightened creed the prophets were at the same time moving away from the limitations of National Religion. The God who was the "Lord of the whole earth" could not be the monopoly of one nation: the worship of the God whose service was righteousness could not be restricted to a single ritual system. In thus making religion more inward and personal, the prophets were likewise making it more universal; and it is their imperishable glory that, out of the wreck of the fortunes of the nation, they saved its religion for humanity. No doubt it cannot be said that they realised in all its fulness the idea of a universal religion: they had not completely grasped the principle that true religion is in all places where men worship in spirit and in truth. But the prophets assuredly had learned to recognise that the religion of Jahveh was not for Israel alone, and they foretold the day when heathen peoples would acknowledge Him and come to worship at His shrine.[1] The human mind was drawing very near to the conception of a universal religion.

The ethical monotheism and the universalism of the Hebrew prophets from the eighth century B.C. to the close of the Exile marked the flood-tide of spiritual religion in the Old Testament. We note meanwhile that in a nation, as in an individual, a high tide of spiritual life is usually followed by an ebb: a period of relaxed energy succeeds the time of tension, and the forward movement having spent itself a reaction ensues. So it was in Israel. The day came when the voice of the prophet was silent, and there was no longer any open vision. The reaction took the form of a return to legal and ceremonial religion in an amplified and intensified form. Of this the Priestly Code, as we find it in Exodus and Leviticus, is the memorial. The return to ritualism meant a return to nationalism and particularism, and the loss of the larger and more humane

[1] *Vid.* Isa. ii. 2, xl. 10; Mic. iv. 1 ff.

outlook. Religion in Israel became mechanised, and the worship of the spirit was depressed by a burden of observances and prohibitions. We see a similar process in the Persian religion, which became legalised and stereotyped in the Vendidad. In both cases also we witness a strong growth of eschatological conceptions, and these reflect in their scope and purpose the narrower mind and temper which religion has developed. When religion becomes a tyranny of sheer observance, it can only be saved from decay and death, if it is saved, by a new and powerful uprising of the ethical spirit which breaks the dominance of a priestly caste and proclaims the freedom of faith.

Where such a decisive reaction has taken place, it has done so at the instance and under the inspiration of great spiritual personalities who have become the founders of a new religion. These commanding figures do not step up in the stage divorced from all connexion with what has gone before: their reaction against existing religion is made possible by their positive relation to it. But we certainly cannot fully explain them by an analysis of past history or by a study of the existing religious environment. There will always remain a unique and inexplicable element in the depths of personality, and nowhere is this so patent as in the case of the spiritual genius who founds a religion. The older forms of religion grew up slowly and almost imperceptibly, the product of the collective mind seeking satisfaction for its needs. Founded religions, on the contrary, are the outcome of a vivid personal experience on the part of an individual, and reflect his outlook on the world and life. Taking form at the outset in the religious consciousness of a person, these religions lay stress on the inward and subjective side of the religious relation. They invite a personal faith in the founder and a feeling of sympathy with his message. The fact that the inward and spiritual side of religion is thus emphasised involves a new and deeper idea of the religious relationship itself. The old conception of physical kinship with the gods, and the notion of a

natural relation between the god and the tribe or nation, are felt now to be crude and inadequate. Man's relation to his god is no longer a ready-made fact, but a spiritual end to be realised. The inner spirit is not the monopoly of any caste or people, and it is in his spirit that man is religious. So the ancient limits are transcended: faith is possible for all; and because it is so, religion in its higher forms becomes missionary in its activity and universal in its claims. Instead of a religion for a tribe or a nation, we have a religion for humanity.

(b) *Main Features of Universal Religion.*

The final claim of religion to be universal is in singular contrast to the ideas and temper which prevailed in the earlier stages of religious development. For the tribe and the nation cling to their religion as something peculiarly their own, a possession which they could not and would not share with alien peoples. At first blush it might appear that the process of individualising religion had narrowed rather than extended its scope. Yet on further consideration it will be plain that what seemed a paradox is in reality a great truth: in individualising religion we are at the same time universalising it. For by individualising is here meant construing religion as something inward and personally realised; and as men have the same spiritual nature they can partake of the same religious experience. Neither physical kinship in a group nor participation in a given ritual system can create in a man or take from him the human spirit by which he worships and serves his god. Hence Universal Religion in appealing to the spirit appeals to men without distinction of class or race. The salvation or redemption which it offers is open to all; just as the object of worship is one, and the method of divine service everywhere the same.

Historical religions which claim to be universal are all of them religions which have been personally founded.

From small beginnings they have spread rapidly, and the missionary zeal they have displayed has corresponded to their inward vitality. After passing through many vicissitudes these religions are still alive and vigorous, and claim a multitude of adherents: they are Mohammedanism, Buddhism, and Christianity. Let us consider how far they respectively fulfil the conditions of a true universality. We shall begin by considering the character of the latest of these religions—the religion of Islam.

In rapidity of growth neither Christianity nor Buddhism is so remarkable as the religion of Islam, which in something like fifty years overran Arabia and dominated the Arab races. Semitic paganism lingered longest among the Arabs. In the sixth century after Christ the popular faith of the Arabs was a belief in jinns, or spirits that haunted deserts, ruins, and uncanny places. Allah was reverenced as the giver of rain and good gifts, the controller of destiny, and the avenger of injustice. But in the pre-Islamic period there was no definitely organised cult of Allah, nor special rites dedicated to his worship. From a spiritual point of view this was apparently a somewhat bare and unpromising soil from which a universal religion was to spring. The rise of Islam in this mean environment was due to the inspiration and religious genius of Mohammed. Nevertheless, we must remember that Jewish and Christian influences were at work in Arabia towards the close of the sixth century, and higher minds were being touched to religious issues of which the older paganism knew nothing. Apart from such influences it would be hard to understand the teaching of the Prophet. The faith of Islam itself must in the first instance be explained through the intense religious consciousness of Mohammed, and by his vivid sense of a divine message and a divine mission. He was no vulgar impostor, but sincere according to his lights, and his own religious consciousness dominated the development of his religion. "God is one": the unity and omnipotence of Allah stand in the

forefront of the creed of Islam. The mind and will of Allah were communicated to his Prophet, who in turn revealed them to men. Islam is *par excellence* a book-religion, and the Koran is the book of Mohammed. His religion is set down for us there,—a religion narrow and intense, with simple and well-marked features. Allah is one, transcendent and omnipotent, and he knows all. "He knows what is in the sea and on the land, not a leaf falls without his knowing it." "He is the living and abiding one, neither slumber nor sleep overtakes him."[1] The supremacy, and even arbitrariness of the divine will; the manifestation of that will in his Prophet; the responsibility of man and his duty of slavish submission to that will; heaven for the faithful and hell for the infidel; —these are the main traits of the religion of Islam. It claims to be universal and demands acceptance, not despising the suasion of force when other methods fail. Mohammed tolerated and consented to the propagation of his creed by the sword, and without force it would not have won its way so speedily. The limitations of this religion are its anthropomorphism, its atmosphere of miracle, the poverty of its idea of God, and its intolerance. Among less advanced races such as the Negroes and the Mongols, Islam, in virtue of its simplicity and directness, has won its way. But it is just on the inward and spiritual side, so important in a religion which aspires to be universal, that Islam is weak. Its conception of piety is in the end external, and stress is laid on unquestioning submission and mechanical obedience. No distinction is made between the spiritual and the civil order of society, between Church and State; nor is there any idea of religious toleration. There is a pronounced anthropomorphic element in the Mohammedan faith; and while the religion of the Prophet makes the other world intensely real, it gives no stimulus to social and intellectual development in this world. On the whole

[1] The Koran as quoted in Bertholet's *Religionsgeschichtliches Lesebuch*, 1908, p. 368.

Mohammedanism, though it claims to be universal, only transcends imperfectly the limitations of National Religion. It lacks the inward spirituality and humanity which must characterise a religion for all men. While Islam may continue to spread among savage and semi-civilised peoples, it does not and cannot win its way among the highly developed races.

Where Islam is weak Buddhism is strong, for it is a religion which lays stress upon and appeals to the inner spirit of man. The system of external precepts and ritual ordinances was set aside by the missionary of the inner life, Gautama the Buddha. In one sense Buddha, who was born in the latter part of the sixth century B.C., may be regarded as continuing Brahmanism rather than reacting sharply against it. The Vedânta philosophy had already proclaimed a message of deliverance from the illusions of this earthly experience through knowledge. And Buddha's own gospel was a gospel of deliverance from the illusions and snares of sense through the enlightenment of which he was the prophet. But while this is so, Buddha silently yet firmly set aside much that was important in the then existing Brahmanism. The system of caste he treated as valueless, and the Brahmanical theology seemed to him futile. The elaborate order of sacrifices he judged to be unnecessary as well as cruel; and self-torture he considered vain. To Gautama the secret of man's sorrow and suffering, and of his redemption likewise, lay within himself. "Each man his prison makes": and inasmuch as salvation came from within, it was open to every one. "My redemption," he declared, "is for all men." The way of wisdom lay in recognising the fact of suffering, in knowing its origin and extinction, and the path which led to its extinction. The image of Gautama which rises before us is that of a soul gentle, tender, and very pitiful, offering salvation to a world travailing in pain. The remedy he believed lay in the extirpation of man's insatiable desire, the suppression of the will to live, the casting away of the fetters of sense.

The enlightened soul which enters on and pursues this *way* is following the path which leads to the supreme consummation:

> "Unto Nirvâna. He is one with Life,
> Yet lives not. He is blest, ceasing to be.
> *Om, mani padme, om!* the Dewdrop slips
> Into the shining sea!"

Nirvâna, the absolute end, cannot be described by any positive predicate. "When from the down-rushing iron hammer the spark springs forth and by and by fades, we know not whence the fire has gone—and so we cannot say of the finally redeemed who have escaped the fetters and the flood of sensuous desires, whither they have gone." At first sight Buddhism might seem to propound the intolerable paradox, that the supreme value is the annihilation of all value. Yet Nirvâna is not pure nothing, though it is deliverance from all change,—from passion and suffering, birth and death. Like the "consummation" of the Neo-Platonists and some of the mediæval mystics, no human terms can describe it.

Buddhism has the qualities of inwardness, universality, and humanity, but it has attained them at the expense of ceasing to be a religion in the commonly accepted sense of the word. For in its original form Buddhism had no God nor theology: it offered no outlook into a higher world, but was simply a way of life and an attitude to experience. The goal was negative rather than positive. Its career as a religion in after days would be inexplicable if Buddha himself had not grown into a divine and heroic figure, who was glorified in myth and legend, and was the centre around which cult-forms gathered. Popular Buddhism wandered far from the *way* of its founder: it even came to have a heaven and hell, and rewards and punishments hereafter.

Though there is much that is gracious and fascinating in Buddha and his creed, this religion has defects which disqualify it from attaining the universality at which it aims. There is an eudæmonistic element in Buddhism

which expresses itself in the dread of suffering, as if suffering were always an evil to be avoided. With this there goes an individualistic spirit; for the end after which the Buddhist strives is individual, and society is only a means to the end. The Buddhist practises the virtues of kindness and pity to pained and heavy laden mortals, but he seeks thereby to discipline and perfect *himself* in the task of extinguishing desire, not to make an evil world better. Consequently his creed is a creed without hope or inspiration, and he has no incentive to do anything for the spiritual development of humanity. The passive side of Buddha's character is reflected in his doctrine of desire, which is so marked a feature of his religion. It is interesting to compare Buddhism with Stoicism. Both show a "recoil upon the self," as Dr. E. Caird has said, and both treat as vain the values on which the ordinary world sets store. But in inner temper and outlook on life the two are very different. If the Stoic despised "the world and the desire thereof," he rated all the higher the inner personality. He will not shrink from sorrow and pain when they come his way; he will endure them, and by endurance prove his own worth. Even amid the wreck of things he would stand unmoved—*impavidum ferient ruinæ*. Not so the Buddhist. Personality is too deeply tainted with desire and passion to remain for him a centre of value. He will die to every desire because all are alike vain: he seeks for peace in some transcendent bourne, where love and hate, and even the light of consciousness itself, have faded for ever away. Differing here, Buddhism and Stoicism are again alike in this, that they set before men, who after all have to live and work in this present world, an ideal which they cannot consistently realise.

Christianity is the third and the greatest of the universal religions; and it is easy to see—and that apart from dogmatic assumptions which we cannot fairly make at this stage—that it fulfils better than any other faith the conditions of a Universal Religion. The religious

environment within which Christianity arose was Judaism, and the genesis of the Gospel is not to be understood apart from the religion of the Old Testament. The spiritual affinity of Jesus, however, was not with the existing Jewish religion, so legal and ceremonial in its character, but rather with the ethical and spiritual religion of the Hebrew prophets. After religion had run for long on the dead level of legal observance and mechanical performance, the spirit of the older prophets flamed forth anew in Jesus and reached to heights before unknown. So much so that the religion of Jesus has something of the freshness of a new creation as it stands forth in contrast to its mean surroundings. Only imperfectly is the gospel of the Founder of the Christian faith to be explained through his environment and the motives which were at work in contemporary society: more in this religion than in any other do we receive the impression and feel the influence which proceed from a unique personality. Were the person of Jesus a mythical creation, as some in these days have suggested, the rise and development of the Christian faith would be quite unintelligible. Apart from the historic Christ we cannot trace spiritual forces at work in the age and place, which could have produced the living image of the Son of Man and generated the Christian spirit.

Let me point out briefly how much fuller justice Christianity does to the claims of the religious consciousness than either Buddhism or Islam. In the first place, the religious relation is maintained as a relation between persons: according to Jesus, the image of father and child fitly represents the relation of God to man. Moreover, the content of the Christian idea of God is far richer than the Allah of Islam, who is little more than the abstraction of omnipotence. If the Christian God is a Being who far transcends His creatures, He is also the Love which encompasses them and the Spirit which is reconciling the world unto Himself. Again, in its way of conceiving the individual and social aspects of the religious

ideal, and in its doctrine of the right spiritual attitude to the world, the religion of Jesus does ampler justice to the needs and possibilities of human nature. Christianity neither merges the individual in the social whole, nor does it set forth a religious end which is merely individualistic. Rather does it regard the individual and society as essentially related, or complementary the one to the other. The spiritual goal is a kingdom of spirits in which the good of the whole is reflected in each of the members, and the members find their fulfilment in the life of the whole. The Christian doctrine of the Kingdom of God is the corrective of that false individualism which preaches the attainment of his own salvation as man's sole religious vocation. Nevertheless, no religion has laid clearer stress on the value of the individual soul and its preciousness in the sight of God. The personal activity of Christ was largely a saving and uplifting work for individuals, a work which was the expression of a loving and compassionate spirit. Yet the compassion of Christ is not the resigned and hopeless pity of Buddha. It is inspired by the consciousness of the infinite worth of men and women, who are the children of God, and by the desire to lift them upward to the fulness of fellowship with Him. For the God of Jesus is more than a transcendent Being, "on the limit far withdrawn." His spirit bears witness with our spirits, and the pure in heart see Him. Again, the Christian attitude to the world is far truer and saner than that of Buddhism. Jesus did not fall into Buddha's error of condemning all desire as in itself evil, for this really involves a mutilation of human nature. His aim was to elevate and ennoble desire, cleansing it from baser elements and directing it towards a spiritual end. Consequently His message was not to flee from the world, but to avoid being entangled and led captive by purely worldly interests. The religion of Jesus calls for the active exercise of the will. It urges men to overcome the world by the power of the spirit, and, through the might of faith and of purified affections, to make the things of earth the

stepping-stones by which the soul mounts upward to its supermundane goal. Christianity does not seek to save men from the world, but from the sin which is the deepest source of human misery and degradation. And deliverance from sin is a spiritual process: it does not depend on external observances or on a system of sacrifices. Christianity recognises to the full the presence and influence of sin in human lives, but it preaches a gospel of redemption from sin through the power of divine grace. The last word is not pessimistic but optimistic. By its full and fair outlook on human nature and human life, Christianity has the best claim to be the Universal Religion.

It will be said, and I am not concerned to deny it, that Christianity in its historical development has not remained true to the large and humane ideal of its Founder. It seems to be the fate of all religions, that a time of abounding spiritual life passes into a season of decline and decay. The noble idealism of the Hebrew prophets was followed by the dreary legal and ceremonial religion of later Judaism. When Buddhism lost the impulse given by its founder, it was superseded by its older rival and ousted from the land of its birth. And so with Christianity; there came a reaction towards ritual, ceremonial, and even magical ideas which reached a climax in the Church of the Middle Ages. Moreover, the energy of theologians, incited by the rise of heresies, was spent in rearing elaborate theological structures; and the acceptance of the ecclesiastical creeds was pronounced necessary to salvation, though this was remote enough from the mind of Jesus. Hampered by ritual and doctrinal elements, Christianity has moved but slowly forward to the accomplishment of its universal mission. Yet despite these obstacles and difficulties, the Christian religion carries within it powers of renewal and development greater than any other religion. These worked with conspicuous effect in bringing about the Reformation; and to-day, after so long a time, they are still living and operative. The intrinsic greatness of Christianity is

revealed in this capacity of development by which it advances with the advancing life of humanity, and, in the spirit of its Founder, continues to minister to the ever growing and ever changing needs of an aging world. Only a religion which develops can be a truly Universal Religion.

(c) *Phenomena of Survival.*

I have thought it best at this point to direct attention to a feature which is very marked in the history of religions, and which is commonly known as 'survival.' In this chapter the growth of religion has been traced from the primitive and tribal stage to the development of religion in the civilised state or nation, and finally to the rise of Universal Religions. It would be a mistake, however, to suppose this is a process in which the older beliefs are constantly being taken up into and merged in the later and higher faith. This is often not the case, and we repeatedly find in a social system earlier beliefs and practices existing side by side with those of a later and maturer culture. We shall have occasion afterwards to consider the bearing of these facts on the interpretation of religious development. At present it will be enough to draw attention to the facts; and first of all let me remind the reader that an individual with some measure of scientific culture often inconsistently retains superstitious beliefs, a heritage from his early years. This is still more frequent in a social system, which is by no means intellectually homogeneous, but contains very different strata of culture and intelligence. Consequently beliefs which are discarded by the educated may continue to influence the thought and conduct of the ignorant; and among the adherents of the same religion the faith of the simple will be leavened by superstitions which the cultivated have abandoned. Christianity does not mean exactly the same thing for the speculative theologian and for the labourer in the fields, nor is the Brahmanism of the intellectual Hindu identical with that of the Indian peasant.

In speaking of religious survivals, let me say at the outset that all religious beliefs do not maintain themselves. Some elements of older religion have vanished, leaving no distinguishable traces behind them. Or, if they persist, they have ceased to possess a religious significance and are only discernible in the customs and superstitions of the common people. The tales of fairies, brownies, and ghosts which still circulate in civilised lands, and are told to the children, were once part of a system of religious beliefs in a far distant past. But they have ceased to play any part in the religious life of the people, and only sentiment keeps them alive. Nevertheless, if some beliefs do not survive others do; for the popular mind clings tenaciously to ideas and customs which entered deeply into the life of former generations. Hence we find features of primitive religion persisting, not only after the rise of national worships, but in the presence and under the shadow of universal religion. It may conduce to clearness if we distinguish two forms in which the phenomena of survival may be seen and studied.

(1) Elements of primitive belief may be brought into relation with a more developed religion without, however, forming organic parts of its structure. Sentiment would not discard the old, but thought could not fuse the new and old into a consistent whole. In some cases this connexion of elements of earlier and later origin looks not unnatural: in other cases the result is peculiarly incongruous. In illustration we may point to the method of preserving a place for the primitive spirits alongside the greater gods of national religion, by making them the servants or messengers of the higher deity. The nymphs become the creatures of Poseidon, the sea-god of Hellenic religion: the Maruts or wind-spirits are made the servants of Indra, the storm-god of the Vedas. Zeus, the heaven god, gave his protection to a primæval tree worship when the sacred oak of Dodona was consecrated to him. The sentiment begotten of the old animal worship of a nomadic people explains the peculiar sanctity of the cow in the

developed religion of Zarathustra. In a like way we may explain the association of particular animals with some of the Hellenic gods. This, too, seems to be the reason of the grotesque custom seen in some religions of depicting certain gods in half-human and half-animal forms. In the ancient religion of Egypt the god Horus has the head of an ibis, Thoth that of a hawk, and Anubis wears the head of a jackal. What in an after age passed for a kind of symbol of the god was at one time thought to be the form of his manifestation. But it is especially in the ritual that religious survivals are to be found, for the ritual is always the oldest part of a religion. It is not necessary to illustrate this point in any detail. Let me remind the reader, however, of the practice of reciting prayers and liturgies, the original meaning of which has been forgotten, or even in an obsolete language which the priests themselves do not understand. Then the frequent use of stone instruments in the performance of sacred rites, long after the use of iron has become common, is an interesting illustration of survival brought about by conservative sentiment. It usually is the case that the ritual of a developed religion is the student's best guide to the primitive system of beliefs out of which that religion grew.

(2) In the instances we have been considering the older beliefs are brought into relation with the later religious system, though they can be distinguished from it. In the second form in which the phenomenon of survival presents itself, primitive beliefs and practices persist alongside a higher religion. They do not blend with nor form an integral part of the higher religion, and they are not consistent with it. They are an inheritance from a remote past: changes in the structure of society have not obliterated them, and they live on in virtue of the power of custom and sentiment, and through the appeal which they make to the minds of the ignorant and superstitious. So the old spiritism and magic linger amid an alien environment, dear to the simple and unlettered, nearer their

hearts than the greater gods of national religion. We come upon these lower strata of religious belief underneath the national cults of ancient Egypt and Rome; and the Babylonian pantheon rises above a rank and vigorous undergrowth of spiritism and of magic. This juxtaposition of religious ideas which belong to very different levels of culture can be traced equally well among peoples of the present day. Turn, for example, to modern India, and you will find side by side nearly every phase of belief, from refined theism and pantheism to the crudest animism. "There has been a loose and luxuriant growth of religious fancies and usages; and the religion has become a conglomerate of rude worship and high liturgies; of superstitions and philosophies, belonging to very different phases of society and mental culture."[1] Hence it is impossible to discover in Hinduism a coherent system of belief. The religion of the peasant often remains uninfluenced by the greater gods of Brahmanism. "He will, it is true, bow at their shrines, and he has their names sometimes on his lips. But he trusts more in the host of godlings who inhabit the pile of stones under the sacred tree which forms the village shrine."[2] If we go to Burma we find Buddhism is the religion of the people, and their religion is reflected in their temper and life. But Buddhism in Burma was superimposed on a far older animism, and this ancient spiritism continues to live and flourish. To the Burman the forest, the mountains, and especially the trees are alive with spirits which he terms Nats; and along with his reverence for the Buddha the native combines a wholesome dread of offending the Nats.[3]

By way of a concluding illustration let us look for a moment at the Hellenic religion. The cult with which we are all most familiar is that of the Olympic gods, the gods who live in the poetry and art of Greece. But it

[1] *Asiatic Studies*, by Sir Alfred Lyall, second series, 1889, p. 292.
[2] W. Crooke, *The North Western Provinces of India*, 1897, pp. 244–245.
[3] *The Soul of a People*, by H. Fielding Hall, 1902, p. 250 ff.

has been shown that in the classical period there was another type of religion which claimed many worshippers. It was the cult of the Chthonian gods, the gods of the earth and underworld; and a distinction has been drawn between the two cults. The Olympian cult, according to a recent writer, is one of service, and the Chthonian one of aversion, or of avoidance of ills.[1] For example, the Anthesteria was a feast to the ghosts, the κῆρες, spirits of disease and ills, and the ritual was a means of averting the harm they might do. In any case it seems clear that the Chthonian religion is a type distinct and independent, and preserves the elements of the ancient but still living spiritism upon which the Olympic pantheon was superimposed. Here also the ritual is the guide to the student who tries to trace out the vestiges of the ruder religion behind the more refined.

The foregoing remarks will serve to show that the progress, from tribal through national to universal religion, is not a process of development in which the older beliefs are steadily taken up by the later faith and minted anew. No doubt the constant tendency of advancing culture is to suppress or modify the cruder features of savage belief. But the ideas and customs of the immemorial past are gifted with a tenacious life: if much is taken, much abides, and where the educated laugh the simple and unlettered are not without faith. It is these survivals which help us to trace our religious lineage: "Thus it is that savage religion can frequently explain doctrines and rites of civilised religion. The converse is far less often the case." [2]

On the whole subject we may conclude that society, in its religious evolution, does outgrow, if only slowly and with difficulty, the primitive beliefs of the past. It will do so more completely when the spirit of culture penetrates all classes of the people. It cannot be said that this has been fully accomplished in any nation. Nor is

[1] *Greek Religion*, by J. Harrison, p. 7 ff.
[2] Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, vol. ii. p. 357.

there any religion that is not hampered by lower beliefs which do not belong to its life, and which impede its progress. The most developed and spiritual religion is Christianity, and yet in such matters as the doctrine of the Mass and reverence for relics, we see that a large section of the Christian Church has never liberated itself from magical and superstitious notions. Future progress will depend on the gradual elimination of such ideas and practices. But all existing religions reveal to us a complex structure; they are built up out of diverse materials which cannot, as they stand, be worked into a consistent and harmonious whole. And it is a testimony to the vitality of a religion, when it gradually discards the elements which are foreign to its nature, and strengthens and develops the things which are central and essential.

CHAPTER III.

CHARACTERISTIC ASPECTS OF DEVELOPED RELIGION.

We have now traced the evolution of religion from the primitive stage to the rise and spread of the Universal Religions. It remains for us to examine more closely some of the characteristic features of higher religion; and in doing this it will be best to follow the line suggested by our discussions of the psychological basis of religion. The religious consciousness, we saw, had its emotional, volitional, and intellective aspects, each of which was essential, although one element might be more prominent than the others. Whenever one of the factors predominates to any marked extent, it serves to give a special character to a religion or to one of its phases. At the same time, with the growth of man's spiritual personality, there is a development and a refinement of all the different elements, and no one of them can remain uninfluenced by the progress of the rest. We have therefore to consider some of the characteristic ways in which feeling, thought, and will function in developed and spiritual religion. I begin with feeling.

A.—The Spiritualisation of Feeling.

The central importance of feeling in all religion, and the dominance of the emotions in the early forms of religion, have already been pointed out. A powerful but ill-regulated affective life is characteristic of man in the lower culture, and finds notable expression in his religious

acts. Fear and awe, trust and hope are blended in early piety, and stress of feeling liberates itself in violent emotional outbursts. The progress of culture no doubt tends to suppress or modify the exuberance of the primary feelings, and gives balance to the affective life. Yet it does not do so completely, for outbreaks of religious excitement—and that, too, in some of their wilder forms—recur from time to time even in the midst of settled and civilised societies. For example, in ancient Greece the phenomenon of *μανία*, or religious possession, was associated with the religion of Dionysus, which had its original home among the wild tribes of Thrace and found its way southward. The frenzy of those celebrating its rites was a trait of the Dionysiac cult; and while Greek culture toned down the cruder features of this orgiastic worship, it could not altogether obliterate them. A like reversion to an uncontrolled emotionalism took place in the later Roman religion, during the period of decadence which followed the introduction of Eastern worships about the beginning of the second century before Christ. The cults of Cybele, Attis, and Isis were connected with orgies of feeling to which the old Roman religion, sober and unenthusiastic, was a total stranger. The mainstay of the ancient State Religion was patriotic and conservative sentiment, and when this grew feeble many welcomed the advent of extravagant forms of worship which gave free play to the emotions. There is a fascination in extremes of feeling; and modern social progress, bringing increased powers of inhibition to the individual, has not been able to save men from being swept away by the tide of religious excitement. There is an element of truth in the theory of a recrudescence of primitive traits in modern revivals. Though appearing within a Christian environment, and appealing to Christian ideas, the revival movements which from time to time pass over a country are attended by phenomena which reveal the working of violent and elemental feelings. And they owe part of their attractiveness to this fact. Subconscious processes prepare the way, and at the psycho-

logical moment, and without prevision on their part, men and women are borne away by a flood of emotion. At such times ordinary religious reserve is broken down, a psychical infection runs through the crowd, and tense feeling finds utterance in songs and confessions, in extravagant joy and in fits of weeping.[1] Physical collapse and convulsions sometimes occur, and the exuberance of emotion leaves reactionary effects on mind and body. That the 'revival' has higher and better features is not in dispute; but the fact remains that it is commonly linked with phenomena which belong to a lower stage of religion, and are not without danger to the higher spiritual life.

There can be no doubt that the personal development which goes with social progress makes for mental balance, restraint, and general self-control. The structure of civilised life demands foresight and reflexion from individuals: mental evolution reacts on the feelings, and its general tendency is to chasten and spiritualise them. The feeling-tone of modern Christian worship is inexplicable apart from the long social and spiritual development which lies behind it. Let us try to understand how this refining process is brought about.

The growth of religion is marked by an increased definition of the religious object, which acquires a character and traits corresponding to man's advance in personal consciousness. The forms of gods and goddesses with determinate qualities replace the vague and elusive spirits, and their worship is organised in fixed ways. The cult-forms become a recognised and elaborate means by which men hold fellowship with the deities they reverence, and win the help they need or the deliverance they desire. Moreover, gods endowed with a personal character and tendencies are fitted to be the objects of higher and purer

[1] The expert evangelist is skilful in using the means to bring about the desired emotional atmosphere, for this is essential to his success. For some relevant remarks on this point, *vid.* Ames, *The Psychology of Religious Experience*, 1910, p. 266.

emotions: and the well-organised cultus, on the other hand, is an excellent centre and rallying point for the emotional life of the worshippers. Through the systematised worship of the state or the religious community men and women have their religious feelings evoked and fostered by regular means, and acts of piety are associated with a constant tone of feeling. The crude displays of fear and joy which went with primitive religion are gradually replaced by more settled and complex emotional dispositions, and these are connected with their appropriate objects. The process is made possible by the gain of a richer content, alike on the side of the religious subject and of the religious object. The formless and mysterious spirit is dreaded, but the god in whom man recognises the counterpart of what is best in himself elicits a finer emotional response. The process by which the feelings are organised in the ethical religions is bound up with the growth of the sentiments. The emotions, simple and complex, are the materials out of which the sentiments develop and upon which they depend. Sentiments are organised emotional dispositions, more diffused, constant, and equable than an emotion which must be experienced at a particular time. The emotion comes and goes: the sentiment abides, and denotes a permanent affective disposition towards an object. Accordingly the latter, far more than the former, reveals the trend and aspiration of the personal history. It is in and through the blending of the emotions with the stable disposition we term a sentiment that man organises his affective life, and brings order and system into what would otherwise be chaotic.[1] The value for the religion of civilised man of this constant feeling-attitude towards religious things and acts will be at once apparent. Let me illustrate this from the characteristic religious sentiment of reverence. The more elementary emotions of fear, of wonder, and of awe become fused into the emotion of reverence, which is relatively a more complex state. But reverence, in the form of an emotion evoked on specific occasions, gradually

[1] On this point, *vid.* McDougall, *Social Psychology*, p. 159 ff.

passes into a permanent feeling-disposition of the religious subject, and qualifies his whole attitude to the religious object. This sentiment interfuses itself with sacred persons, places, and acts of worship, and goes to constitute the atmosphere in which the religious spirit lives and breathes. In a like way religious gratitude, which was a definite emotion experienced on account of some good vouchsafed by the deity, in spiritual religion is transformed into a sentiment that denotes a constant feeling-attitude towards God. With the development of mental activity sentiments are further generalised, so that they can exist apart from a specific reference to concrete objects. There are, for instance, sentiments of dutifulness and truthfulness. At the same time it is necessary to bear in mind that the association of sentiments with concrete objects is essential, if the religious feelings are to gain the requisite system and coherency. It is this reference to concrete objects which makes it possible for the affective dispositions of the religious man to function as an orderly whole. The system of religious objects provides the basis for the system of religious feelings.

A further feature in the evolution of the emotions and sentiments has been put in a clear light by Mr. A. F. Shand, to whom the discussion of this subject owes much.[1] The sentiments, or organised and stable dispositions referring to objects, in their turn become the fixed centres around which the emotions gather and for which they act as qualifying predicates. In other words, when a constant sentiment exists, under appropriate conditions it will serve to evoke an emotion, and this emotion blends with and qualifies the sentiment. One can hardly overrate the value of sentimental dispositions in forming a centre and support to the more spiritual emotions. Their importance in evoking and guiding the flow of religious emotion is unquestionable. For example, the emotions of joy and sorrow, penitence and gratitude, awe and sympathy, as

[1] *Vid.* his article in *Mind*, N.S., v. p. 203, on "Character and the Emotions."

they visit the worshipper in the sacred place, depend for their peculiar tone on the underlying sentiment of reverence which they qualify. The glow of spiritual feeling which the Christian experiences as he bows before his Maker in the sanctuary is not due to some simple and single circumstance. Behind it is the continuous presence of religious sentiments: these form the steady background upon which the emotions play, like the shadows that flit over a landscape, and from which they receive their specific tone. It is plain that the evolution of sentiments out of emotions, and the further complex interplay of sentiment and emotion, give its richness to the affective life of the civilised man: they invest that life with a range and variety, with an inward wealth of subtle differences, to which savage man is a stranger. Religion gains greatly thereby; and the higher religions strive, by the skilful use of suggestive symbols, to produce the requisite spiritual atmosphere. The architecture, furniture, and ritual of temple and church are designed to provoke that tone of feeling which fosters the spirit of worship and invites the soul to rise from earth to heaven. In this careful employment of the proper means the Church was guided by a just perception of the value of the end; for if sacred things and seasons evoke no emotions, if sentiments do not gather around them, the spiritual life fails of freshness and vigour, and worship becomes mechanical. The intimacy and reality of religion depend very much on the way in which it enters into our affective life: the colder reason must be suffused with the warmth of feeling, if piety is to flourish. A religion which is in bondage to the emotions may be extravagant and sometimes dangerous; but a religion of pure reason is not even possible. In a healthy religious mind the tendency to emotional instability is kept in check by the character which has been developed by the rational will. Moreover, the constant sentiments interfused with the practical religious life are hostile to emotional excess. The growth of sentiment, as has been said, means the organisation of the affective and conative

life: and organisation is the foe of the spasmodic and fitful.[1]

The function and value of feeling in religion help us to understand the motives which underlie some of its characteristic manifestations in the history of religion. The glow of feeling, intensifying religious experience, seems to bring the subject into closer and more vital union with the religious object. The reflecting, discriminating, and comparing activity of thought appears to preclude that intimacy of fellowship with deity after which the soul aspires.

Thought begins and ends with a relation, and difference is essential to its movement; but the heart craves immediacy of experience. The endeavour to transcend the ordinary consciousness in order to reach this goal, is the common feature of the various forms of mysticism which occur and recur in the history of religion. The mystic rebels against the sober restraints and the hard limits of the world of common consciousness, and longs to lose himself in a vaster Being. Mysticism has been defined as "that attitude of mind which divines and moves towards the spiritual in the common things of life."[2] But while this description may be true, it is so general that it does not distinguish the mystical from the higher religious consciousness. It is right, I think, to say with Dr. Inge, that mysticism has its root in the dim consciousness of the *beyond*, which is the raw material of all religion.[3] But it is precisely in the development which it gives to this consciousness that the specific character of mysticism is to be found, and its contribution to religion is to be valued. We can distinguish a twofold tendency in mysti-

[1] The deleterious effects of unregulated emotion in religion are well known, and may be recognised even in a case like that of Bunyan. In *Grace Abounding* he speaks of experiencing "such strange apprehensions of the grace of God that I could hardly bear up under it"; and he confesses that "if that sense of it had abode long upon me it would have made me incapable for business," p. 252.

[2] Granger, *The Soul of a Christian*, 1900, p. 41.

[3] *Vid.* his Bampton Lectures on *Christian Mysticism*, 1899, p. 5.

cism, a negative and a positive: a revolt against the limitations of sense and time, and a deep desire for fulness and immediacy of divine experience. Mysticism only emerges on the higher levels of religious development, for it involves a sense of the inadequacy of the given world to which savage man is a stranger. If we are to find a counterpart to it in primitive religion, it would be in the phenomenon of ecstasy; but mysticism is larger than ecstasy, and satisfies desires more spiritual. That it is no accidental phase of the religious consciousness is apparent from the way in which mystical phenomena appear in different religions. In India, the Yogin sought by fixed contemplation to induce ecstasy, and by a *tour de force* to transcend thought and gain the spiritual goal. Hence, Yoga was the means to the highest knowledge. The Persian Súfís, the devotees of a mystical pantheism, disclose a tendency alien to the genius of Islam, but which points to a need of human nature. The orthodox attitude of the followers of the Prophet to Allah was an abject fear; but the Súfís conceive the bond between man and God as love, and aspire to a mystical absorption of the human soul in the divine. If we turn to the later movement of Greek thought, we discern in Plotinus and the other Neo-Platonists the leading traits of mysticism. There is the same dissatisfaction with the ordinary method of knowledge, and the same demand for a full and rapturous union with the transcendent One—*ἔκστασις καὶ ἅπλωσις*.[1] To treat of the Christian mystics of the Middle Ages and afterwards would be to enter on too wide a field. But I may remind the reader that Mediæval Mysticism was a genuine spiritual movement on the part of men wearied with the barren dialectic of the Schoolmen, and

[1] Under Oriental influences the older Platonism was so modified by the Neo-Platonists, that rational insight ceased to be the chief quest, and an ineffable fulness of mystical feeling became the supreme goal. Cp. Plotinus, *Enn.* vi. 9. 4: *γίνεται δὲ ἡ ἀπορία (περὶ τοῦ ἑνὸς) μάλιστα, ὅτι μηδὲ κατ' ἐπιστήμην ἡ σύνεσις ἐκείνου, μηδὲ κατὰ νόησιν ὥσπερ τὰ ἄλλα νοητά, ἀλλὰ κατὰ παρουσίαν ἐπιστήμης κρείττονα.*

craving a new fulness of spiritual experience. The double aspect of mysticism, its negative and its positive side, is clearly marked in the Mediæval Mystics. "The way to ascend to God is to descend into oneself," says Hugo of St. Victor. "Leave thy body and fix thy eye upon the uncreated light," cries Albertus Magnus. The identification of the mystic's mind with God has been declared with startling boldness by Meister Eckhart: "God and I am one in the act of my perceiving Him." "In this simple and intense contemplation we are one life and one spirit with God," says Ruysbroek. In the *Theologia Germanica* and in St. John of the Cross, the necessity of turning away from self and the world to attain the mystic vision is emphasised. To the mystical theologian, visible things serve as the images that lift the soul to the state of exalted feeling in which conceptual thought is transcended. Hence, as has been remarked, the tendency of Mysticism is to despise historic mediation, and to treat individuality as a vanishing quantity.[1] The danger in Mysticism is, that it weakens the rational and practical side of religion, and inclines to substitute pantheistic absorption for spiritual communion. Its strength lies in its perception, that only through the spiritualised emotions can the depth and inwardness of religion be realised. In this sense we can agree that there will always be a mystical element in the higher religious life.

The movements termed Pietism and Evangelicalism, in the forms in which they have appeared in the Reformed Churches, lay stress on feeling, but also accentuate the personal and active side of piety. Like Mysticism, Pietism sets little store on the theoretical and rational interpretation of religion, and it would agree with the thought of Pascal, that the heart has its reasons of which the reason knows nothing. But it emphasises the place

[1] Siebeck, *Religionsphilosophie*, pp. 314-15. In James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* and in the *Études d'Histoire et de Psychologie du Mysticisme* of H. Delacroix (1908), the reader will find suggestive discussions of the part played by subconscious processes in mystical experience.

of Christ as the object of religious sentiment, and speaks rather of reconciliation with God than of immediate union with Him. A trait of the pietistic and evangelical mind is its strongly marked emotional attitude to sin: hence its call to repentance and the stress it lays on conversion. The phenomena of conversion are often associated with feeling-experiences of a pronounced kind, and, like the sudden 'illumination' of the mystic, they presuppose the existence of subconscious mental processes. These processes are at work in the preliminary stage to conversion—a stage which is characterised by unrest, spiritual distress, and anxiety. This stage issues in a climax, and then the tension is suddenly relaxed and is followed by a state of mind in which the barrier of sin is felt to be removed, and the depressing sense of estrangement from God has passed away. Joy and peace now reign within. The pietist and evangelical interpret the conversion process in terms of the orthodox theology of the Church, and the feeling-changes are explained by reference to a given doctrinal scheme. The value of this experience lies in the fact that the emotional upheaval may prove a dynamic influence, enabling the individual to break with evil habits and rise superior to former sins. Not infrequently the subject of these emotional changes has become what is termed 'a changed man,' and gone forth to lead a new and better life. In some cases the tide of feeling flows and ebbs without seriously influencing the individual for good. Pietism, nevertheless, exaggerates the importance of a stereotyped form of religious experience, and fails to recognise that there are more paths than one to the spiritual goal.

Our general conclusion is, that spiritualised feeling plays an important part in giving an atmosphere and tone to the religious life. The more violent forms of emotion are indeed of questionable worth in an ethical religion, and they are inevitably followed by a reaction. But the constant sentiments, and the flow of feeling which interfuses itself with them, lend warmth and inwardness to

personal religion. While thought is necessary if the religious consciousness is to have meaning and universality, it is through the emotions and the affections that religion is made an individual possession. We turn now to consider the rational aspect of developed religion.

B.—Religious Doctrines.

In the evolution of religion one can perceive an increasing influence of thought upon the religious life. At every stage, indeed, thought is present, and is essential if religious feelings are to be significant. But in the beginnings of religion it works almost instinctively, and only at a later period does it become reflective and self-conscious. Thought gives definiteness to the religious object, and generalises the religious relation: it makes explicit the teleological connexion between religious acts and the religious end. Religion therefore, as a significant attitude to experience, depends on the activity of thought. The broad principle on which the mind proceeds in this activity is that of analogy: through the qualities of which he is conscious in himself man conceives the divine object. He makes his gods in his own image, and 'never knows how anthropomorphic he is.' Animism reveals a naïve use of analogy: it is a man's instinctive projection of his own life into the world around him, his first crude impulse to find meaning in experience. The development of personal consciousness carried with it a more adequate use of analogy in religion and elsewhere, and we can see this in the conscious desire for explanation. The germs of reflexion appear when people are driven to ask themselves, Why are things so? What is their explanation? "The Polynesian surrounded by the ocean, asks himself how his island, *his* world, sprang out of the bosom of the deep; the Hottentot and the Kaffir marvel that the moon-god, their great-grandfather, although at times lost to sight ever revives, while his children must die."[1] By an extension of

[1] Tiele, *Elements of the Science of Religion*, vol. ii. p. 53.

the same spirit of inquiry, men were led to ask how the heavens and the earth came into being. The world itself must have been brought into being by some such process as that by which man himself produces the objects he wants. So the myth became the cosmogony, and the gods functioned as the creators and builders of the universe. Greeks, Babylonians, and Hebrews at divers times and in various manners set forth their ideas of the making of the world; for the framing of cosmogonies was a widespread custom, and marked the transition to a reflective view of things. Yet up to this point imagination rather than thought prevails, and with the cosmogony goes the legend. The legend is a story which gathers round a god or religious hero, setting forth his origin and deeds. There may be, and there often is, an historical core around which the tale is woven—the Buddha legend is a conspicuous instance. But the idealising process has been at work; and in the result we have a narrative which is designed to describe the past so as to elucidate the present. The legend, though it is the outcome of imaginative thinking, has a value that does not depend on its historic accuracy. While still preserving the note of wonder and reverence needful to piety, the legend, with its tale of the origin and doings of the god, helped to humanise the god: it brought him out of a remoter world into the realm of human interests and affections. The religious story served to fill in the outline of divine forms with characteristics drawn from the model of human qualities.

The earliest attempts men made to explain the things done in the cultus were by telling stories how this or that act came to be practised: hence the vogue of myth and legend. It was a continuation and development of the same tendency which gave rise to religious doctrines. Religion is always present as a system of acts and observances ere men deliberately try to find a *raison d'être* for them. In a like way language always exists in a fully articulated form before an attempt is made to expound the principles of grammar. Every experience precedes in time

the attempt to understand it. The desire to explain is an outgrowth of the need to understand, a need which is born of the exigencies of practical life. The call to adjust means to ends engenders the reflecting spirit, and this spirit continues and steadily increases in importance. Religion, which embodies the values man reads into his experience, especially invites his intellectual activity; and through religious doctrines he strives to invest with general meaning, and in this way to justify, the acts he performs in worship. What his forefathers have done on the strength of tradition he will now comprehend as the expression of a truth. After particular doctrines are evolved and obtain currency, the need arises of connecting them together and forming them into a coherent whole. Hence in highly developed religions theological systems arise which seek to expound the value and meaning of these religions in propositional form. Not by an accident, but by an immanent tendency of the religious spirit is theology evolved. To borrow an image from Lotze, theological doctrines are like the bones of the body, the outcome of the life-process itself and also the means by which it gives firmness, stability, and definiteness of outline to the animal organism. No universal and spiritual religion could maintain itself without some doctrinal statement of the principles implied in its own life.

The growth of religious doctrines then presupposes a living religion with a number of practical beliefs associated with it. On the advent of the reflective spirit these beliefs are felt to require explanation and more exact formulation; and in the case of a missionary religion there is the necessity of stating these principles in a form in which they can be communicated and taught to others. But religion which has invoked the aid of reflective thought finds it has employed a very independent servant who has no idea of working within narrowly-prescribed limits. The free activity of reflexion develops doctrines which are doubtful, or appear to be inconsistent with other beliefs held to be important. A familiar instance of this is the

crop of Gnostic heresies that troubled the early Christian Church, and compelled it to draw a distinction between what was heretical and what was orthodox and catholic. To meet the perplexities of such a situation it was natural to put forward the idea of an authoritative Church, which could discriminate between the true and the false, and set forth the true in a satisfactory and valid form. So arose the conception of *dogma*, or doctrine that bears the stamp of a religious society or Church. In the case of the Christian Church its approved dogmas were held to be the doctrines which are believed everywhere and always by all Christians—*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus creditur.* The authoritative formulation of the dogmas of the Church was contained in the Catholic Creeds.

It is intelligible how a Church, in the war against heresy, is impelled to lay the greatest stress on sound doctrine. But it is impossible to deny that the Christian Church was led to overrate greatly the importance of the doctrinal aspect of religion; and it went so far as to condemn all those who did not accept its whole doctrinal system: "Which Faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." Though we can understand how the Church came to make these demands, it is hard to justify them. For it is a historic fact that, in the guise of dogma, metaphysical speculations were offered to the faithful which were but vaguely connected with the facts of Christian experience. Moreover, the outcome of this movement was the exaggeration of the intellectual side of faith at the expense of the volitional and emotional aspects. Correctness of doctrinal belief was made an outstanding test of religious value, and the results were far from happy for the later Church. Religion eventually became anti-religious in its zeal to extirpate heresy. Creed cannot be made to count for more than character without detriment to the inner life of religion.

The problems at issue have been set in a clearer and broader light in modern times, when the evolution of

culture has confronted the ancient creeds with the independent developments of science and philosophy. Science, philosophy, and theology are phases of the activity of the human mind; and though at present they do not yield a harmonious world-view, yet we know that the human mind cannot ultimately be divided against itself. But it is plain that no progress towards unification can be made, so long as theology remains a rigid dogmatic system which claims to be exempt from criticism and modification.

One good result of the situation has been a widespread desire to reconsider dispassionately the function and value of religious doctrines in the spiritual life. When we regard the problem from the psychological and historical standpoint, we can see that their importance, if real, is relative. As we have already noted, religious doctrines are the outgrowth of the religious life: no historic religion has ever been founded upon a clear-cut dogmatic system. A dogma is or ought to be the interpretation of a spiritual experience: it cannot be made the explanation of that experience. But experience is always richer than thought, and no dogma can fully express the secrets of the inner life. Moreover, the theologian, unconsciously sometimes, and sometimes consciously, in the interests of practical religion has worked with figures and images, suggestive, no doubt, but not precisely true. Even where exact formulation of doctrines is aimed at the figurative mode of representation has been retained, as we can see in the legal analogies and the eschatological imagery of the ecclesiastical creeds. If the theologian is disposed to insist on the perfect accuracy and sufficiency of his images, he will not come to an understanding with the philosopher. In these circumstances liberal theologians in our own day have proposed that the symbolism which obtains in the cultus should be extended to religious dogmas.[1] The dogma on this view would cease to be a

[1] The function of symbolism in theology has been recognised by A. Sabatier and Ménégoz, and among philosophers by Lotze and Höffding.

scientific formulation of a spiritual truth, and would become a figurative expression for a spiritual content whose value lay in being experienced. Through the recognition of the office of symbolism in religion, the religious consciousness is brought into close relation with the æsthetic. At the same time the thoroughgoing endeavour to reduce religious doctrines to symbols would bring with it difficulties and dangers of another kind. It is very doubtful whether a symbolism which boldly proclaimed the inadequacy of all religious doctrines, would maintain that degree of concord in conviction and endeavour which is necessary to an institutional religion. A church, at any rate, would not hold together, if its members were generally agreed that all formulations of religious truth were more or less hypothetical. So, while it is true that there are dogmas which may be interpreted symbolically, — and in some cases are perhaps best interpreted thus—it is not likely that symbolism can always prove a sufficient substitute for doctrine. The important thing seems to be, that we should frankly recognise the dependence of religious doctrines on religious experience, and be ready to expand or modify them with the growth of that experience. And religious experience, be it remembered, develops because it is an element in, and is constantly affected by, the developing culture of the age. The error has been to regard a dogmatic system as the fixed and authoritative basis of a Church, instead of the historic and growing expression of the Church's spiritual life. A religion without doctrine becomes something too elusive to serve for a bond of union. But religion is only a doctrine because it is first of all an experience, an experience which has its roots in life.

In an earlier day Goethe had proclaimed the symbolic element in human experience:

> "*Alles Vergängliche*
> *Ist nur ein Gleichniss.*"

And Carlyle repeated the lesson in his own way: "Various enough have been the religious symbols, as man stood on this stage of culture or the other, and could worse or better body forth the Godlike."

C.—Spiritual Worship and the Religious Life.

No religion has existed without acts of worship. Some form of cultus is essential if the reverence and devotion which are characteristic of piety are to be maintained and fostered. A piety which does not express itself in action is shadowy and evanescent; and beliefs which are not acted out become feeble and valueless, like a bodily organ atrophied from lack of use. Worship has the function of giving reality to the religious spirit: it is the dramatic representation of the inward feelings and desires of those who worship. As man becomes more spiritual he seeks more spiritual ways of worship. The cultus, which is the focus of religious life, develops with the development of the religious consciousness, and gains in scope and depth of meaning. In the lower religions, worship is almost entirely a matter of specific acts duly performed, and small importance is attached to the frame of mind in which they are performed. But when religion advances and takes the form of a national institution, worship is much more fully organised, in order that it may express the personal relations which subsist between man and his gods. In the legal and ceremonial religions this organisation is excessive, and the inner spirit is sacrificed to the multiplicity of observances. The universal and ethical religions lay stress on the subjective or personal side of piety as the condition of spiritual service; and while worship is regarded as essential, it is not reckoned of value by itself, but is brought into close relation with the conduct of life. Worship in the temple or church becomes part of a wider service continued in the world, and religion itself is conceived to be a 'way of life' or a 'path of salvation.' The service in the sacred place ceases to have a value apart from and in contrast to the wider service of an obedient will. Spiritual religion distinguishes the secular from the sacred in a manner that national religion did not do; for, by laying emphasis on the subjective side of piety, it was able to give

prominence to the conception of a religious society over against the world. Some such idea was necessary, so soon as it was clear to man's growing spiritual intelligence that a religion of purely external acts was neither worthy nor consistent. If it is only the outward deed which can reveal the spirit, it is only the spirit which can give value to the outward deed. This recognition, that faith and personal piety were needed to spiritualise worship, was of the greatest consequence. And it carried with it the perception that the spirit which informed worship must also pervade life, if conduct was to be religious in the deeper sense of the word. So, while spiritual religion distinguishes the secular from the sacred, it contains within it the principle by which the difference can be overcome. The principle is the inward personal life of the spirit, which realises itself by passing out into the sphere of man's common duties and making them the means of working out his spiritual ideal. The religious spirit which thus transcends the opposition of sacred and secular transforms the whole of life into a spiritual vocation, and renders the doing of the divine will a true worship. Hence the religion which distinguishes most clearly between the Church and the world, at the same time teaches most plainly that the secular can be made the means of fulfilling the spiritual. The present age has come to see that a religion which does not give depth and meaning to the whole of life is wanting in reality and value.

But while spiritual religion refuses to separate worship from the religious conduct of life, and even finds truth in the idea that a man reverences God by doing his duty, it nevertheless does not resolve worship into the performance of duty. For it recognises that worship, in the narrower sense of the term, fulfils a spiritual function in man's existence: nor is it easy to believe that religion could maintain itself apart from any cultus and by ethical service pure and simple. For example, the so-called Religion of Humanity has not been able to dispense with a cult, and indeed emphasises its importance. Nor is the

need of a cult surprising when we consider the normal demands of the religious spirit. For religion is more than temporal service: it is temporal service illuminated and inspired by a supramundane and divine ideal. Spiritual faith, in its essential nature, means a movement of the soul away from the seen and temporal to the unseen and eternal. Hence the spirit, enveloped in the things of sense and time, must nevertheless keep alive within it the sense of its lofty vocation and its transcendent goal. As long as religious consciousness postulates a Power above itself who can enter into helpful relations with it, so long will it seek in specific ways to confirm itself in the possession of this help. The needs and limitations of ordinary human nature prompt men to seek a divine strength to sustain them in the fulfilment of their higher calling. In spiritual and ethical religion prayer has ceased to be a wonder-working spell or an efficacious ceremonial form; nor is it, as in the religions of nature, the expression of a mere desire for material goods. Prayer is rather a converse of the human spirit with the divine, a communion in which the individual yields himself to God and seeks wisdom to know what is best and strength to do what is right.[1] The postulate of the religious mind is, that the soul is in contact with a wider spiritual life from which gracious and uplifting influences proceed. The validity of this postulate does not fall to be discussed at the present stage. But we note the fact that the prayer-state is generally felt to be a genuine element of the religious life; and this no doubt because those who pray are inwardly prompted to do so, and find prayer to be of spiritual and practical value. The sincerely religious person does not depend on rational arguments for the efficacy of prayer: he justifies it to himself experimentally, and believes in it because it has helped him. His standpoint is pragmatic: he applies the test of working-value.

[1] It is of course true that prayers of a lower kind persist in higher forms of religion, and various influences perpetuate the survival.

So, too, social worship is practised, because it is felt to be a means of inspiring and sustaining the spiritual consciousness of the religious society, and of keeping alive within it the feeling for those social ends which are involved in the nature of religion. Hence the seeming paradox, that religion must be individual, and yet a purely individual religion is valueless. Or, as we should rather put it, a merely individual religion is not religion in the true sense of the term. No man lives or dies to himself only; and the spiritual life in the individual demands a social medium for its growth and fulfilment. In the worship of a Church his need of sympathy is met and his religious convictions are sustained. For the cultus is the visible expression of the faith of a religious community and the corporate confession of its devotion to ideal ends. Through his membership in a Church a man receives the opportunity as well as the stimulus to organise his life, so that it shall subserve the accomplishment of those spiritual ends whose value is proclaimed in social worship. With the development of human culture the tendency is to supersede the older notions of a miraculous or magical efficiency attaching to the forms and ritual of worship, and to insist instead on the spiritual and ethical value of the cultus as an integral part of the religious life. There is evidence that the social efficiency of a religion is not maintained in the absence of those uniting and inspiring influences which flow from a common worship. You cannot take away anything which sustains the consciousness that religion is a living bond of union without taking away from the practical value of religion. Hence that excessive individualism which runs into sectarianism mars the working power of a church. With some further questions which here suggest themselves I will try to deal in the following section.

D.—The Individual and the Religious Community.

We have noted how, in the evolution of religion, the religious bond of union is gradually transformed into a spiritual relationship. The religious society, at first the clan or tribe, afterwards the nation, finally becomes a Church or free association of those who are united by a common faith. Not by the tie of blood or by the right of citizenship are men made members of a Church, but by the presence in them of a religious spirit and by their self-dedication to spiritual ends. The development of the conception that religion was a living spirit, freely desired and personally appropriated, entailed for its consequence the further idea of a spiritual community organised to realise religious ends: so the Church marked itself off from secular society. Both Buddhism and Christianity show us the phenomenon of the rise and growth of a Church. At first a union of ascetics and mendicant monks, the Buddhist Church by and by became a more complex organisation with ritual of worship, distinction of priests and lay members, saints and general councils. As in the case of Buddhism, the Christian Church had its source and inspiration in the life and teaching of the Founder of the religion. The primitive Christian Churches were religious unions of those who professed faith in Christ and freely accepted the obligation to follow Him. The Pauline Churches were composed of persons who enjoyed equal religious privileges, and who were drawn together from different ranks of society by the same faith in Christ and devotion to His service. The mark of the Christian was inward, not outward: the possession of the spirit of Christ. And this in the end is the truest mark of a Christian Church: *ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia.*

The Christian Church had to develop its organisation and forms of activity to meet the tasks which lay to its hand when it became the Church of the Empire. The simple fellowship of the apostolic days was transformed

into a complex and graduated system, whose members discharged manifold offices and whose heads pursued far-reaching ends. But in the Mediæval Church we note that progress at various points has ceased; development has even passed into a retrograde movement which led men back to a stage which Universal Religion had transcended. Jurisdiction in matters secular as well as sacred was claimed for the Church on the ground of an outward authority mechanically transmitted to the successors of Christ and the apostles; a great priesthood flourished who were declared to be the necessary mediators between man and God; and the rites and sacraments of religion were invested with magical efficacy. The whole process was in the direction of externalising and mechanising religion, and the freedom and inwardness of personal piety were sacrificed to a rigid and oppressive institutional system. Obedience to an institution had been converted into a bondage destructive of that freedom of the spirit which is a note of a truly spiritual religion. The Reformation became an urgent necessity, and it rescued the individual from his servitude to the rule of the Church. Its proclamation of the rights and privileges of faith, which was a free act of the individual soul, once more brought men to the standpoint of spiritual religion. And the doctrine of the universal priesthood of believers, in denying the Romish conception of priesthood, at the same time reaffirmed the principle which lay at the root of Universal Religion,—the principle that religion has its centre in the inner life of individuals and is personally and freely realised. Moreover, a needed change in the conception of the Church was introduced by the Reformers, and they saw themselves obliged to distinguish between the *visible* and *invisible* Church. The error of the Romish theologians lay in claiming for the former what was due only to the latter. Yet the distinction is not a hard and fast one: the two conceptions melt into one another. The one represents the truth or ideal nature of the Church, and the other its imperfect existence-form; the latter is

related to the former like the body to the soul. The value of the conception of an invisible Church lies in the idea which it expresses, that the true and perfect Church is never a present fact but an ideal to be realised. The inference from the doctrine of the Reformers is, that a Church ought to be a religious body free to work out, without external hindrances, its own immanent ideal. Outwardly conditioned the historic Church must be by the fact of its existence within the structure of civil society; but none the less the line of its spiritual development must be self-imposed, not imposed from without.

To some modern thinkers it has seemed that the Church as an institution is destined to pass away. Richard Rothe believed that the Church would finally be absorbed in the spiritualised state, an optimistic forecast which, it must be confessed, the conditions and tendencies of modern life do little to justify. The Dutch theologian Rauwenhoff thought the Church was inseparably linked to what he called "supernaturalism," and the day of the supernatural having passed, the idea of the Church will be superseded by that of the religious society.[1] Guyau, in his *L'Irreligion de l'Avenir*, takes a view still more extreme. He looks for a time in the future when all notions of union in worship will be abandoned, and there will be a general dissolution of all dogmatic beliefs.[2] This will no doubt be the case if the day comes when men cease to demand a meaning for existence and a satisfying end to their endeavours, when they are fully content with the seen and present world and desire nothing beyond it. But the spirit of religion seems too deeply rooted in the constitution of human nature to encourage such an expectation. History teaches us that, though the spirit of religion in one age be depressed beneath the burden of secular interests, it victoriously reasserts itself in another. The one thing religion does

[1] *Religionsphilosophie*, 1889, p. 607.
[2] *Op. cit.* p. 323 ff.

not do is to vanish away, leaving men well satisfied to take the horizon of their natural existence for the term of every hope and every desire. And so long as religion is a real motive in individual lives, so long will a spiritual organisation or Church be necessary to maintain piety and promote religious ends. These ends are social as well as individual, and they cannot be attained by isolated and individual efforts. Where an individual is powerless a great organisation is irresistible. Hence religion has to preserve its institutional form, in order that it may unite and direct the energies of many wills towards the attainment of one great end.

When we look to the actual working of religion we recognise how closely the personal and social factors, the individual and the Church, depend on each other. The collective faith of the Church lends stability and assurance to the faith of the single soul, and man becomes a prey to doubts when he can find no support for his own beliefs in the beliefs of others. "My belief," said Novalis, "has gained infinitely to me from the moment when another human being has begun to believe the same." The Church thus supports the faith of the individual, and throughout the changing history of many generations maintains the continuity of religious tradition and experience. The Church supplies an atmosphere which encompasses the child: it gradually communicates to him as he grows up a body of religious beliefs: and it holds before him in later years spiritual ideals of conduct. It is a constant and shaping influence upon the individual mind and will, widening a man's spiritual horizon and impressing on him the value of ideal ends. The Church makes it possible for the men of each new age to face the problems of the present enriched by the spiritual wisdom of the past. The ordinary person who separates himself entirely from religious institutions is prone to decline to a lower level of interests, and to be led captive under the tyranny of secular things. Whatever be the defects of the historic Church—and they are no doubt many—it at least urges

on men the truth that they are more than "thriving earthworms," for their destiny lies beyond this mundane order of things. The danger has been, and still is, that the institutional side of religion presses so heavily on individuals that their faith is a traditional and unverified belief rather than a personal conviction, free and spiritual. *Köhlerglauben* is not a monopoly of the Roman Catholic Church; for in all Churches men and women are to be found whose religion is an inheritance instead of a deliberate and self-conscious attitude to life. A very clear and dispassionate thinker has set on record the following opinion: "Probably there never was a time when the amount of beliefs held by an average educated person, undemonstrated and unverified by himself, was greater than it is now."[1] And what is a general tendency in other departments of knowledge is likewise present in the sphere of religion. There are certainly many to-day, though perhaps not so many as in former days, whose religion has been gained in a way almost as instinctive and mechanical as their language: it is illuminated by no personal vision, it is the issue of no inner struggle. It is an inheritance they have acquired because they could not help it; a creed they are not disposed to doubt, because they have never examined it. On the other side we have to set the fact that there are men in every society who are deeply interested in the religious problem, and who are striving earnestly to appreciate rightly the function and value of religion in the individual and historic life.

While institutional religion is the stable background, personal religion is the factor which makes for progress. Institutional religion can maintain itself for long through the sheer momentum of its former course; it cannot maintain itself permanently if religion ceases to be vital in individuals. In the personal consciousness the need of reform and progress becomes vividly felt, and through the individual it receives expression in speech and action.

[1] *Vid.* the *Memoir* of the late Professor H. Sidgwick, p. 609.

Hence, through the reaction of personal wills on the institutional ground, religion develops with the developing life of society. The decline of personal religion is always the sure herald of a general spiritual decadence, for it betokens the advent of a formal religion from which the quickening spirit has fled. On the other hand, the excessive predominance of the subjective factor stimulates the rise of sects, or leads to a wide unsettlement of mind which may pass into scepticism. An institutional religion which has not the strength to overcome these individualistic movements, or at least to control them, must in the long run fall a prey to a process of disintegration.

The cause of spiritual progress, therefore, will be best served by the healthy interaction of the personal and social factors. The over accentuation of one of them may indeed be an advantage at a particular period in order duly to emphasise some urgent need. The very exaggeration of a tendency will arouse people to the consciousness of a truth which they had begun to forget, or had failed to realise. A stable equilibrium of elements does not seem to be a constant feature in any department of human activity; and advance more often takes place through oppositions and reactions than by a peaceful and harmonious development. Good Hegelians dwell on the power of the negative; and we may admit that there is a kind of dialectic in experience, for the human spirit refuses to rest in any partial fulfilment of itself and strives after a complete and satisfying consciousness. In religion the vitality of both factors, the individual and the social, is the pledge that the exaggeration of one of them will in due season elicit a corresponding reaction, and lead ultimately to a readjustment on a higher level. If religion is to conserve its value, it must preserve its continuity with the past and show itself capable of developing in the future. For religion is an outgrowth of the historic life; and if you tear the spiritual plant from its root in the past and place it in an artificial environment, it will speedily wither away. But the mere inheritance of a

continuous life will avail little for religion or for any other institution, if that life does not expand to meet the wants of a growing world. Human culture is a developing whole, and religion, as an element in that whole, must develop in order to live. These conditions are only satisfied when the social and personal factors freely interact to realise the spiritual ideal.

CHAPTER IV.

RELIGION: ITS ESSENTIAL NATURE AND RELATIONS.

A.—Definition and Specific Character.

In an earlier chapter we made reference to the problem involved in the definition of religion. But we postponed the fuller consideration of the question until we had made some study of the history and working of the religious consciousness. A study of the kind was presupposed in any adequate attempt to exhibit the essential nature of religion; for only in the light of knowledge gained in this way is it possible to distinguish what is substantive from what is accidental and adventitious. We have now, however, come to a point when we can profitably reconsider the matter and try to form some conclusion. With the general facts of religion before us, and interpreted from the psychological point of view, we may endeavour to make clear what is specific and essential in religion as contrasted with other forms of culture. A word of caution will not be out of place here against introducing speculative conceptions of the nature of religion into its definition. Our concern at present is with the nature of a historic phenomenon. In any final interpretation of the meaning of religion, metaphysics must not be excluded: but it is important that the image we form of religion should in the first instance be formed on the basis of its psychology and history, so that the truth, as far as possible, may show in its own light. The psychological view of religion is not final, but it ought not to be merged in a speculative

theory of the spiritual life. Nor should we take it for granted that the latest forms of religion alone give us the key to its meaning. This at least is not true without qualification, and it implies a conception of religious development which it is better not to assume.

When we keep in mind the psychological factors of the religious consciousness and the way in which they work, some definitions of religion strike us by their inadequacy and onesidedness. We find perhaps that they are applicable to certain stages of religion, but not to others, or that they leave out what is important. In his *Science of Religion*, Max Müller termed religion "a mental faculty or disposition which enables man to apprehend the infinite." Yet this definition will not apply naturally to primitive religions, and there is much in developed religion of which it takes no account. Prof. E. B. Taylor, in his *Primitive Culture*, gives as a minimum definition "a belief in spiritual beings," which is at least widely applicable, though it omits a good deal. A more adequate definition is that of Prof. Menzies in his *History of Religion*: "The worship of spiritual beings from a sense of need." On the other hand, when Höffding, in his *Religionsphilosophie*, describes religion as "faith in the conservation of value," he rather offers us a philosophical conception of the ultimate meaning of religion than denotes what it is in its actual working. A good definition can only emerge after a careful and dispassionate study of the facts in their fulness and variety. Now an examination of the phenomena makes it plain that, if we are to say what religion is, we must take cognisance of its double aspect. It is a process which has two sides, an inner and an outer: from one point of view it is a state of belief and feeling, an inward spiritual disposition; from another point of view it is an expression of this subjective disposition in appropriate acts. Both aspects are essential to the nature of religion, and they act and react on one another in the process of spiritual experience. Consequently any definition which takes account of only one of the sides must be judged defective.

Under this category would fall Cicero's explanation of *religiosi* as those *qui omnia quæ ad cultum deorum pertinent diligenter retrectant*: for in this performance the religious disposition may be lacking. Still more onesided is the definition which has recently been proposed by M. Salomon Reinach: "A body of scruples which act as an obstacle to the free exercise of our faculties."[1] We can safely say that to identify religion with a system of taboos is to ignore what is most valuable in it, and to select a subordinate feature and call it the whole. You cannot do justice to the nature of religion by trying to reduce it to the magic and superstition which gather round its beginnings. Much more adequate is Pfleiderer's statement of the essence of religion: "The direction of the will which corresponds to the idea of the Deity."[2] Yet to our thinking he wrongly denies that feeling belongs to the essence of religion, though he somewhat inconsistently admits that it is a note of the actual presence of religion. A good definition of religion must contain some reference to all the psychical factors which operate together in religious experience.

The remark is frequently made by writers who have sought to define religion, that its manifold and widely different historic forms constitute a serious difficulty. They find themselves confronted with the dilemma of a definition so wide that it has little meaning, or so narrow that it does not cover all the facts. For example, the primitive Nature-religions and Buddhism lie so far apart that it is hard to embrace them in a single conception. If we proceed by eliminating specific differences in order to reach a common ground, we seem to come back to a colourless residuum rather than a constitutive principle. A definition which applied as fully to Fetishism and Totemism as to Buddhism and Christianity would hardly convey a clear idea of what religion really was. A perfect verbal definition framed on these lines is not, I think, likely to be achieved, and it would be labour lost to try to

[1] *Orpheus: Histoire générale des Religions*, p. 4.
[2] *Religionsphilosophie*, 3rd ed. p. 329.

devise one.[1] In dealing with the question two considerations should be kept in mind. There are, in the first place, features in every religion which do not belong to the substance or essence of religion, and we may on this account disregard them. Thus there is much in the details of religious doctrine and in modes of worship which, though it may cast light on a particular phase of religion, does not help to determine the nature of religion as a whole. The latter is something more profound and enduring, and finds expression in a variety of forms. In the second place, we are not justified in supposing that the whole essential nature of religion is revealed in its simplest and most primitive forms. The motives and impulses out of which religion issues will be found, it is true, even in its beginnings. But all that man seeks and realises in religion is not apparent from the first, and only becomes explicit in the later stages of development. For instance, the specific character of religious goods, or the significance of worship, will not be adequately gathered from the study of tribal spiritism or fetishism. As man advances in personal life, he reveals more clearly how much he seeks and hopes to find in his religion. Hence a definition which endeavours to bring out what is characteristic of religion in the light of its whole history will undoubtedly state more than is patent in the crude religions of nature. Or at least it will set forth explicitly features which are only dimly anticipated, or presented in germ, at the primitive level.

A definition of religion should bring out the genetic principles or motives which underlie the development of the religious consciousness. It was Aristotle who made it plain that a definition must not merely describe the facts, but should also state the cause or reason.[2] In defining

[1] When Runze (*Katechismus der Religionsphilosophie*, 1901, p. 215) defines religion as *Sammlung des Gemütes*, in seeking to be comprehensive he has lost sight of what is characteristic.

[2] *οὐ γὰρ μόνον τὸ ὅτι δεῖ τὸν ὁριστικὸν λόγον δηλοῦν . . . ἀλλὰ καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν ἐνυπάρχειν καὶ ἐμφαίνεσθαι*, *De Anima*, ii. 413*a*.

religion, then, it is necessary to indicate the psychical factors and the motives which operate through them in making religion. These factors, as we have seen, are emotive, volitional, and cognitive; for religion is at once a belief, a feeling, and a practical activity of the will. There is, however, the danger of overloading a definition by introducing into it a reference to all the shades of psychical process which seem to be present and the qualifications which seem desirable: we must be content to give the main features.[1] Keeping these points in mind, we suggest the following for a tentative definition of religion: "Man's faith in a power beyond himself whereby he seeks to satisfy emotional needs and gain stability of life, and which he expresses in acts of worship and service." The cognitive side of the religious consciousness is represented by faith, and faith is stimulated by emotion and posits the object which will satisfy the needs of the inner life. One of the most urgent and constant of man's needs is that which is expressed in the desire for self-conservation, or, as we have put it, for stability of life in the face of the manifold forces which threaten and limit him. The practical aspect is denoted by the acts of worship and service which belong to the nature of religion. We offer our definition for what it is worth, but we may add that no definition, however careful, will take any one to the heart of the subject and reveal to him its full meaning and richness. Such a knowledge will depend on personal religious experience on the one hand, and on a sympathetic study of the facts on the other. Some definitions of religion suggest that those who framed them looked on the phenomena from an external standpoint, and were influenced by extraneous considerations. They seem rather to have asked what meaning they could assign to religion in terms of their own theory of life, than to have asked what it meant for those who were religious. In illustration we may refer to the sociologist who reduces

[1] Prof. Ladd (*Philosophy of Religion*, i. 89) appears to have fallen into this error, and gives a long and involved definition of religion.

religion to a protective function of the social organism developed in the struggle for existence.

Let us now attempt to set forth, in connexion with the definition we have suggested, what is characteristic in the religious experience. A notable and persistent feature of the spiritual consciousness is its reference to the transcendent, its direction *beyond* what is immediately given. Even primitive spiritism is a movement beyond the bare facts of the environment and a belief in more than appears on the surface. Man's failure to help himself induced disappointment with his lot and a desire for more powerful helpers. So man, by an impulse born of his needs, seeks to win to his side the mysterious powers which are behind phenomena. The evolution of religion, regarded from one point of view, is just a process which gradually makes clearer what is involved in this reference to the Beyond. In tribal religion the spirits lurk behind the things of sense: in Universal Religion, God is a transcendent and spiritual Reality. If man at any stage of his history had been able to find his complete good within his immediate environment, he would have ceased to be religious. But this reference to something beyond, so essential in religion, calls for an exercise of faith on man's part. The lowest form of religion begins in an act of trust,—trust that under certain conditions the unseen spirits will help their worshipper,—and in the highest form of religion faith plays a great part. The religious mind never reaches its object by a cogent inference from what is given, nor does it measure its assurance by a careful computation of what the premises will justify. Beyond question, religion, in its advanced stages especially, welcomes the aid of reason, and an enlightened piety cannot be anti-rational. But it establishes relations with the suprasensible object first and foremost by an act of faith, of which the real motive is the needs and desires of the soul. Religious faith, then, springs from the pressure of human needs, and these needs in their turn depend on the human nature which reveals itself in them. Man's desire for goods is reflected in the

character of his gods, and desire unsatisfied works change even on the image of things in heaven. But inseparably linked with this conative or active side of the religious spirit are the feelings and emotions in terms of which it is expressed. Piety, at whatever level you take it, is only recognisable as such when it is marked by emotional reactions and suffused by a feeling-tone. The feelings are the quickening life-blood of religion; without them it would lose its distinctive quality.

It may be well to add that the way in which the religious mind refers to a reality above it can never be vague and indeterminate; it cannot, for instance, be a mere affirmation that there is a region of mystery beyond the seen and the tangible. The divine object will always be one which satisfies a personal and spiritual need, and it will primarily represent a value. Pure fact by itself has no religious interest; only when it takes the form of a good for human souls can it evoke religious feeling. A God of whom all we knew was that he existed, or an Absolute of which we had merely an "indefinite consciousness," as Herbert Spencer suggested, would be spiritually worthless. Hence the supramundane object of faith is conceived to be a supreme and ultimate value, a value which finally satisfies human needs.

The transcendent aspect of religion, on which we have laid stress, has not always been admitted. The Hegelian philosophy, for instance, asserts that the true nature of religion does not imply any movement beyond the world, apprehended in its full meaning. For God is a purely immanent principle, and the outer world and man are stages of his developing life. The reality of the "other world" lies within this world: it is this world known in its spiritual truth. In other words, we are offered a strictly immanental interpretation of religion; and there are those who sympathise with this line of interpretation without professing to accept the type of idealism which inspired it. Any adequate attempt to refute this theory would carry us beyond the region of psychological dis-

cussion, and would be out of place at this stage of our argument. If, however, this theory is put forward in criticism of what is here advanced in regard to the essential nature of religion, our answer would be that our view really rests on an interpretation of the psychological facts. We do not import the conception into religion, but find it there. The direction of the religious spirit to the supramundane is unmistakable in the Universal Religions, and they only carry to its issue a tendency present in religion from the beginning. Buddhism, if not a theistic is at least a redemptive religion, and it points the souls of its disciples beyond the shifting and illusory world of sense to a transcendent ethical order. Buddhism no less than Christianity proclaims the precept: "This is not your rest." Christianity from the first insisted on the insufficiency of the world, and preached the transitory character of all earthly interests. Whatever criticism may be offered on the validity of this transcendent reference, it ought at least to be accepted as a feature of the working of religion in the past and in the present. From an initial dissatisfaction with its environment the religious spirit has advanced step by step to the final proclamation of the inadequacy of all earthly values. Long entangled and led captive by the lust for temporal goods, the soul has found its self-expression in faith in a Good which is supramundane and eternal. The forms of its worship and the flow of its emotional life are all touched with the sense that its goal and destiny lie beyond this bourne of time and place. But the essential nature of religion will become clearer from the distinctions we now proceed to draw.

B.—Relations to Science, Morality, and Art.

The problem of the relations in which Religion stands to Science, Morality, and Art is one which could not arise save at a comparatively advanced stage of culture. Only with the progress of civilisation did these spheres of

activity become plainly differentiated, and each won an independence for itself. But with the marking out of provinces and the assertion of rights, there came the need of mutual understanding and the adjustment of claims; and the duty of distinguishing had for its counterpart the obligation of establishing positive relations. Science and Morality, Art and Religion, had all proved themselves normal aspects of human culture; and some connexion subsisted between them, for each in its way was a reaction of the human spirit on the facts of experience. These several phases of culture had all developed in response to the endeavour of developing minds to find satisfaction for native desires and wants. In face of their common origin, then, one would say that there must be bonds of affinity between them. But we do not seem to be justified in asserting that one of these phases is logically prior to the others, and has been the source of the rest. The claim has been made for Religion, that it was the origin of Science, Morality, and Art. Beginning in religious motives, and at first consecrated to religious uses, they by and by came to exist for themselves and even to disown the life from which they sprung. This sweeping claim cannot be substantiated. The rudimentary impulses to scientific explanation or to artistic expression do not necessarily depend upon the prior existence of religion: they issue like religion itself fresh from the needs of human nature. Religion in its specific character certainly cannot be shown to condition the rise of the other aspects of culture. As we trace the structure of society backward in time, the lines of demarcation between its provinces grow fainter and we approach the condition of an undifferentiated whole. The religious and the magical are interfused, and they are not clearly distinguishable from the other sides of social life. And while it is true that religion was the earliest to assume a distinctive form, it is too much to say that the other phases of culture were created by it. The roots were already there in the soil of the social life, ready to spring to light under favouring conditions.

(*a*) Let us consider, first, the relation in which Religion stands to Science. The formative impulses of science are to be found in the purposive activity of man. Science, it has been said, grew out of the manual arts. Man, endowed with superior brain power to the animals, and free to use his hands in virtue of his upright posture, set himself early to adjust means to ends in order the better to maintain himself in the struggle for existence. He learned to chip the rough flint into a rude weapon for his hand, and planned means whereby he might capture the wild creatures on which he fed. By the habit of manipulating means towards ends the reflecting spirit was fostered, and out of the will to live the desire to understand was born. As man's desires increased so was his study of the means of satisfying them enlarged, and his outlook on the ways in which things act took a wider scope. It is easy to see how important man found it to understand the causal connexion of things, so that he might anticipate their action and, if need be, divert it to his own purposes. It was on this practical basis that the scientific spirit evolved, the spirit which strives to comprehend the relations of objects and to formulate the laws of their working. At first employed in the interests of immediate wants, science developed into an activity of mind which set a theoretical value on the explanations of natural phenomena.

The aim of science is to establish continuity between the elements given in outer experience, and it achieves this by means of the principle of cause and effect. It goes on the presupposition that phenomena are really connected with one another, and that there can be nothing purely accidental or arbitrary in the order of nature. Inability to state a connexion is a challenge to thought and never an indication of incoherency. The so-called scientific methods are methods in which the scientist interrogates nature, in order to elicit the ways in which facts are causally related one to another. Those forms of causal action which constantly seem to recur—for instance, the production of heat by friction, or the attraction exercised by one body on another

—are termed "laws of nature," and they are comprehensive and convenient summaries of the behaviour of things. In other words, a "law" is a serviceable formula by which the man of science generalises the operations of nature. The aim of the scientific thinker is to reach wider and wider laws, or conceptual formulæ, which shall describe the working of nature as a mechanically connected system of parts. Science, it has been said, is a language by which the mind makes intelligible to itself the largest number of objects.[1]

In themselves, then, the natural sciences are neither religious nor anti-religious. They deal with the facts of outer experience at a level and under conditions which do not raise religious issues. For it is the factual aspect of things which is under review: the question is how facts as such are connected and the order in which change proceeds. When the scientist is able to set forth the quantitative relations involved in a phenomenon, and to determine its place in the series of causes and effects, his proper task is accomplished. There is plainly a great deal in experience which science ignores, and it does so because there is a great deal which is not relevant to its purpose. The limitations of its utilitarian origin cling to it; and the ultimate reality, and the whence and whither of things, do not come within its purview. With the qualitative character of objects and the existence of a realm of ends it is not concerned. The world of personal values and ideals in which the religious spirit lives and breathes is a foreign land to the natural sciences: they are at home in the domain of outer not of inner experience, and on the validity of the spiritual values science as such can give no pronouncement. If science then keeps within its own province, we may fairly conclude there need be no dispute or misunderstanding on its part with religion. Nevertheless, devotion to the objects and methods of science sometimes develops into a narrow specialism which misconceives and exaggerates the range and significance of its

[1] Boutroux, *Science et Religion*, 1908, p. 241.

own activity. The scientist no less than the theologian may fall under the dominion of the "idols of the den." Occasionally the scientific inquirer has claimed to extend his peculiar methods and principles to the whole universe, and has affirmed his right—like Haeckel, for instance—to interpret the kingdom of ends and values on purely naturalistic lines. Religion is bound to resist such an attempt; for a strictly mechanical and naturalistic conception of experience reduces that spiritual view of the world on which it stakes its existence to an illusion. If the criteria of the natural sciences are made the norms of all reality, then the validity of religion must be denied, for its postulates transcend the natural order. So the very notion of moral and spiritual obligation, tried by this test, becomes illegitimate, and man is justified in following only what his natural interests and desires prescribe. For the universe in its essence would be a natural process, and would contain nothing which could not be reduced to mechanical laws.

If the natural sciences insisted on making such claims, their relation to religion could only be one of fundamental antagonism: affirmation on the one side would be met by blank denial on the other. Happily, however, the large majority of scientific men are conscious of the illegitimacy of such demands. There are at least two cogent reasons for restricting the scope of physical science, and for refusing to accept its pronouncements, when offered, on ultimate problems. First, there is the notorious inability of science to explain the origin and development of consciousness from its mechanical and realistic standpoint. Between the mechanical interactions of material elements and the processes of a living mind there is a gulf which is not to be bridged. So transparent is the difficulty that few in the present day are prepared to argue that matter can be the cause of thought: most scientists are content to affirm that there is a correspondence or parallelism between brain changes and psychical processes—a theory which, if taken for more than a provisional "working

hypothesis," has difficulties of its own to contend against. This proved incapacity of naturalism to explain a wide field of experience is conclusive evidence of its limitation. This inference, in the second place, is borne out by the twofold abstraction which marks the method of the natural sciences. Speaking broadly, we may say that they accept their facts as given without inquiring how they come to be given. Reflexion however, shows that the world of scientific facts depends on the relating and generalising activity of the mind. The so-called "facts" of science are all expressed in terms of conceptual thinking, and would not be possible for a purely perceptual experience. In other words, they presuppose a process of ideal construction; and if, for certain purposes, we may leave this truth out of consideration, we certainly cannot do so when we try to explain their real nature. Further, if the natural sciences make abstraction from the experient subject, they also make abstraction from the nature of their objects. They never regard things in their total character, but confine themselves to certain narrow and well-defined aspects in dealing with them. For instance, they do not treat the qualitative character of objects except and in so far as it can be formulated in the way of quantitative relations. Colour is only treated in that aspect in which its differences can be expressed in terms of the oscillations of light waves of varying lengths. Yet the notion of colour is certainly not exhausted by its translation into terms of quantity. Again, each fact is a centre standing in a multiplicity of relations to other facts in the background. With all of these relations science cannot deal, but it selects certain aspects in which it is interested, and seeks to make explicit the connexions that are involved in them. But what is irrelevant for the purpose on hand is not irrelevant when we regard the whole character of the object; and science, in limiting its point of view in order to work effectively, sacrifices any claim to completeness of understanding. In consequence of this severely selective method of procedure the formulæ

with which the man of science operates are never given with absolute exactness in the realm of concrete facts. They represent what will take place under certain assumptions; they are rather working hypotheses whose justification lies in the fact that they do work, or express sufficiently well for the purpose some phase of the behaviour of things.[1] Instead of being the ground of reality, scientific laws are no more than the pale reflexion of the concrete world from which they have been abstracted.

The foregoing train of thought, which is in substance that of some eminent men of science, goes to show that science cannot rightly pass judgment on the nature and value of religion.[2] On the other hand, religion, because its point of view is more comprehensive, has a bearing on the scientific interpretation of the world. For religion, like philosophy, gives us a *Weltanschauung*; and the scientific interpretation of things, in so far as it is valid, must find a place within the religious world-view. The two standpoints are not opposed, they are related to one another as the partial to the more complete, as the causal to the teleological. The sciences operate throughout with the category of causality; and when they have established the existence of causal connexion their task is done. But a determinate connexion which runs in the form of a series of causes and effects inevitably raises the question, how the series comes to constitute a rational whole or coherent system of elements. And the answer seems to require us to transcend the category of mechanical connexion in experience, and to postulate the teleological organisation of experience. That is to say, the continuity between the elements within our experienced world must rest upon the wider principle of a final cause or end which is realised in and through them. The narrower idea, when examined, expands into the wider and justifies

[1] For example, the formula for falling bodies $S = \frac{1}{2}gt^2$ cannot be perfectly accurate in its results so long as bodies fall through a resisting medium, and are subject to the attraction of other bodies besides the earth.

[2] For example, Mach, Ostwald, Poincaré, and Pearson.

itself by so doing. Now, while the theoretical discussion of the notion of *end* belongs to philosophy, the practical use of the idea is central and essential for religion. The religious mind constantly regards the world and life in the light of a final purpose, and relates all parts of experience to a supreme end and value. The causal connexions expressed through the uniformities of nature have worth for it just in so far as they are a means to a divine end: the world interests the religious man, not because it reveals the reign of law, but because it spells the supremacy of purpose. On this view, then, science and religion stand in the relation of two levels of experience, the latter or higher being the realm in which we answer in a practical way the problems raised in the former. Whether the postulates of religion are a satisfactory answer to the problems on hand is a matter which lies beyond the jurisdiction of science to decide: to assert the competence of science in this regard would be as foolish as to make grammatical principles the sufficient test of the value of a poem.

A word may be added on the objection that religion and science are fundamentally opposed in spirit. Science, it is said, is rational, while religion is purely a matter of faith: the one draws sober inferences from facts, the other makes a venture on trust. Though this description is not entirely wrong, it greatly exaggerates the difference between the scientific and the religious temper. Faith and reason are not to be sharply separated and opposed in this fashion; religion is not anti-rational, and science itself involves faith. The man of science has faith in the reliability of the faculties by which he frames his hypotheses and draws his conclusions. He has faith, however baffled he may be for the time being, that if he can but set out from adequate premises and draw logical inferences, these will be verified by the facts of nature. And he has also faith that the uniformities he has established will hold good in the future as they have done in the past, and that the continuity he has found in experience will everywhere and always obtain. In all this the man of

science goes beyond what he can strictly prove: he makes postulates which imply faith on his part. We conclude, therefore, that neither in its method nor its temper is science necessarily hostile to religion; and if science is not anti-religious neither is religion anti-scientific. Temporary disputes and misunderstandings there have been; and they may still be, if the one trespasses on the ground of the other. But an abiding conflict is impossible, unless, indeed, the human mind is in some inexplicable fashion at discord with itself.

(*b*) On any view Morality lies closer to Religion than Science, for its object-matter is not mechanically connected facts, but the values and goods of the spiritual life. Moral values are likewise religious values: and if morality appears to be a part of religion, religions in their turn fall to be judged by an ethical test. The moral and the religious life are both inspired by the desire for goods, though the goods have not quite the same significance in the one case as in the other. At the same time the full meaning of the relationship is only seen by the eye which follows the process of its development in human culture; and failure to adopt this method has led to misconception and dispute. Distinguished anthropologists, like Waitz and Tylor, have declared that primitive religion has nothing to do with morality, an assertion which is only plausible if you mean by morality developed ideas of right and wrong. Beyond question low forms of religion are frequently associated with customs which to our minds are repulsive and immoral. But to apply a test of this kind is as unfair as it would be to say, that savage man has no religion because his religion would be utterly unacceptable to us. The real point is, whether the earliest forms of religion are associated with the elements out of which the ethical life subsequently develops. The answer must certainly be in the affirmative. For the beginnings of ethics are just the customs of the tribe, which stand for a social good and act as a rule binding on the will of the members. Over these customs tribal religion casts

its protecting shadow, and invests them with a religious sanction and value. To disobey the cutsom would be to offend the spirits, and would draw down on the offender mysterious and even magical evils; so intimately are the *mores*, the morals or customs of the tribe, interwoven with its religion. Accordingly, when we are told that among the Ewe, Yoruba, and Tschi tribes of the West African Gold Coast religion is ceremonial merely and has nothing to do with morality, or that the Central Australian aborigines know of no supreme Being who takes cognisance of moral acts, we are content to reply that religion and morality are not being compared at the same level.[1] This evidence, and much more of the same sort, does not really tell against the position we occupy. Westermarck cites instances to prove that, at the present day, great religiosity is sometimes linked with a low morality.[2] The issue here turns on what you mean by religion. To say that immoral conduct may be a feature of a spiritual religion is a *contradictio in adjecto*: what is true is, that a body of superstitious beliefs and practices may quite well go hand in hand with habitual wrong-doing.

The primitive loyalty to the custom protected by the god was a discipline towards the development of the form of moral consciousness which prevails in the National Religions. The custom of the fathers is gradually transformed into a norm or principle of wider scope, whose validity has deeper roots than bygone usage. Civilised society is the true field for the growth of moral ideas and the evolution of duties. What strikes us at this period, is the intimate way in which the moral and the religious are related to one another. Moral and religious ideas seem to interpenetrate and to function as common factors in the national well-being. The values of the national life are also religious values, and patriotism is a form of piety.

[1] Ellis as quoted by Westermarck, *Origin and Development of the Moral Ideas*, vol. ii. p. 664; Spencer and Gillen, *The Northern Tribes of Central Australia*, pp. 491–492.

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 735, 736.

In serving the State, the citizen at the same time serves the gods who preside over the national fortunes. When a people believes itself to be under a theocratic law, the moral life is wholly absorbed into religion, and ethical obligations become religious duties. The Hebrew theocracy is an illustration. In the ancient religion of China the ethical way of life on earth is just the reflexion and expression of the abiding order of Heaven. In the National Religions we never witness the religious and the ethical set over against one another, but always a fruitful interaction between the two. The gods above become better gods through the blossoming of moral virtues below,—think, for instance, on Zeus and Apollo—and the god who is the embodiment of certain virtues invests them with a religious sanction which reacts favourably on their development among men. What we find, then, in the National Religions is the harmonious fusion of the religious and the ethical, both working as one for the fulfilment of national ideals and aspirations. Yet it would be too much to say that the blending of the religious and the ethical in the religion of a nation necessarily has the effect of inspiring the individual with a devotion to the moral virtues. An external and utilitarian religion, like that of ancient Rome, might help to secure the performance of civic duties without influencing the inner moral life of the individual.

The tendency of modern civilisation has been to make the relation of religion to ethics less intimate. The close union of the two in National Religion was made possible by the fact that religion had not yet freed itself from the limitations of the national life, and asserted its universal claim and supramundane character. But when religion ceased to be the peculiar possession of the nation, it could no longer be the guardian of a peculiar type of civic virtue; and when its transcendent aspect and ideals were clearly expressed, it was necessary to distinguish it from ethics whose field was the social life. Moreover, the growth in modern times of critical methods and sceptical doubts, by weakening faith in the authoritative claims and

historic reliability of religions, has given strength to the demand of morality to be separate and independent. The ideas and postulates of religion, it is said, are subject to doubts and uncertainties which never attach to moral conceptions: morality is understood of all; it is sufficient for itself; and it should stand on its own firm ground. "Religion *per se* has nothing to do with morality," says Nietzsche; and the sentiment finds favour with many who are alienated from the Church and yet desire to do their duty by society. Under the inspiration of these ideas, Ethical Societies have sprung up in recent times which give moral and social teaching apart from any religious creed. To those who object that morality in the end rests on religious postulates, adherents of this school reply, that ethics rests on human foundations and is purely a social science. So they present us with a utilitarian conception of morality and a secular ethics stated in terms of scientific evolution. The insuperable objection to this theory—and it is felt by many who are not prejudiced in favour of any historical form of religion—is, that no explanation of moral obligation through ideas of pleasure-value or life-conservation fits in with the actual facts of the moral life. The nature of moral obligation suffers violence when it is reduced to a mere means of promoting individual and social interests. The idea of the good and the expedient refuse to coalesce. If the conception of obligation develops within society, still its full range and significance are not explained by society. Reflexion shows us there is more in the word 'ought' than is contained in the idea of a means to the well-being of any given social system; for the individual to whom obligation is real is more than a mere means to social good, and there is a sense in which society itself is a means to the development of personal life. In the long run what the good man ought to realise is an *ideal* good, and his obligation to do so flows from his spiritual nature. The consistent hedonist can only construe obligation to mean the expediency of preferring a greater to a lesser pleasure.

The real relation in which Ethics stands to Religion will be clear if we follow out the implications of the moral consciousness. Theory always follows practice, and the facts of the moral life precede any reflective theory of its nature and origin. Custom, and afterwards positive law, had already broadly distinguished right ways of acting from wrong, ere the problem of the meaning of goodness was deliberately raised. To the Greek thinkers belongs the merit of first developing a theory of ethics; and Plato and Aristotle saw with unsurpassed clearness the lines on which such a theory should be framed. The fundamental principles on which they proceeded are still valid. The *good* for man, they held, must be determined by the *end* for man, and this again must be understood through his specific character. Goodness in its form therefore signifies the full and harmonious realisation of human powers, the development of man in his essential nature. Moreover, Plato and Aristotle were perfectly aware that no right understanding of human nature was to be gained by a study of the isolated individual; for man apart from society was an abstraction, and he was always a 'social animal.' Hence the ethical end must be both personal and social, that is to say, a good personally achieved in and through social relations. The Platonic and Aristotelian conception of ethics was teleological, and following this method, the end for us takes the form of an ideal which denotes the full and harmonious actualisation of human powers. This ideal has a formal appearance for individuals who are involved in the process of realising the good in time, and they can only dimly forecast the experience of the perfect good. But the ideal gradually receives content from the developing spiritual life of humanity. The legalistic theory of ethics—the theory that moral duties are absolutely determined by a universal law—ignores the truth that the moral law for man must be determined by reference to his psychological and spiritual nature: and that nature is not something stereotyped and rigidly fixed, but develops with the development of spiritual life. If

you neglect psychology and historical evolution, and base ethics on some transcendent and universal law, the result can only be an abstract and unworkable principle which breaks down whenever a serious attempt is made to apply it to the growing and variously conditioned moral life of man. This was patent in the case of Kant's Categorical Imperative. The true function of a moral law or rule for the will is not to determine what is the supreme ethical end or ideal, but to guide human wills towards it. An ethical norm is simply a generalised rule of conduct designed to promote social and individual good: it is not a transcendental principle controlling men from a higher sphere. When many wills have to co-operate, these general rules or norms are necessary; but they are not stereotyped principles, and they partake of the flexibility of the developing social system, where the good is a growing content. The goods and values of the personal and social life, and the norms which guide us in attaining them, fall therefore into an ordered system of means and ends, all being finally related to the achievement of the ideal end which is the ultimate standard. The ideal cannot of course be realised in any single act or series of acts by the individual: the most he can do is to make his lesser ends consistent with and steps toward the supreme End. The moral life is then essentially a progress to a goal, to a perfectly realised good. Such a good would take the form of a perfect social order in which society and the individuals who compose it were means to one another in actualising the ideal.

The problem still remains whether the moral ideal can be conceived to be complete and self-sufficing. Or, if not, does it raise issues which carry us for their solution into the sphere of religion? If the moral ideal when stated in absolute form involves difficulties and inconsistencies, and if morality must find its deeper meaning and completion in religion; then the Kantian theory that religion is a kind of appendage to the moral consciousness has to be rejected on principle. For religion would mean

more than the fulfilment of moral duties as divine commands. It is of course true, that all human action falls to be regarded from the moral point of view; and religions, in so far as they form elements in human culture, will be judged by the moral standard. It does not follow, however, that the moral consciousness, though a legitimate, is a final and adequate standard of religious value. That the moral ideal is not final will, I think, be plain, if we find that it cannot be stated in a complete and perfectly satisfying form. The constant feature of the moral life is aspiration and endeavour: what *is* stands ever in contrast to what *ought* to be. In the individual man, morality assumes the shape of progress in time; but the progress never ends in full realisation, nor is endeavour crowned by a perfect attainment. In the moral life we seek for more than we find and strive for more than we gain.

> "What act proved all its thought had been?
> What will but felt the fleshly screen?"

The pursuit of an ideal never fully realised, the persisting contrast of higher and lower, better and worse, seem essential to morality as we know it. The moral ideal conceived to be a perfectly fulfilled personal and social good, a good which by its completeness excluded further progress, would mean, if it were realised, that the moral life in the form with which we are familiar had ceased to exist. A state of static perfection under mundane conditions would not be desirable for man constituted as he is, and we are apparently entangled in the paradox, that what is ideally best would not really be the best. Nor can we evade this dilemma by boldly proclaiming that the moral ideal is a subjective idea projected by the human mind for a guide to progress, but to which nothing in the nature of things corresponds. For if the Ultimate Good is not real, the ethical standard becomes unstable: if we cannot do more than say that actions are better or worse in relation to one another, our moral valuations become infected with a fundamental uncertainty. A purely

relative way of judging the good could give no security for preferring one valuation to another; only if the Supreme Value have a ground in reality, do we gain a solid foundation for a coherent system of moral judgments and a sufficient test of their consistency. Without surrendering its claim to validity, the ethical consciousness cannot escape from the dilemma in this direction.

But further, if the ethical thinker postulates, as we think he must do, the validity of the ideal, he thereby makes demands on the real universe. He presupposes the nature of reality to be such that it lends itself to the realisation of ethical values. The moral life is a progress towards the ideal, but the progress depends in part on objective conditions which are beyond the control of human wills. Man is a natural as well as a spiritual being, and the progressive realisation of the ethical end in the continuous life of society demands a conformity of the natural to the ethical order. On a purely naturalistic theory of mind and society their ultimate destiny must be inseparably linked to the material system of which they are a part. And if natural forces govern spiritual issues, the result foreshadowed by Huxley is inevitable: there must come a point in the evolution of the universe when "the summit will be reached and the downward route will be commenced," and in the end civilisation with all its values will disappear before the supremacy of cosmic forces. Ethics of itself can give us no assurance that the age-long struggle after the conservation of values is not doomed to a final defeat. On two grounds, therefore, the ethical consciousness requires to be supplemented and completed: it can neither guarantee the persistence of its values, nor can it state the Ultimate Good in a finally satisfying form.

The problems raised by Ethics find their solution in Religion, and it is here that the inner connexion of the two comes to light. For the religious consciousness states explicitly the implications of the moral consciousness: it affirms the reality of an Ultimate Good in the form of

a supreme and personal Will, who is the Ground and End of the natural and the spiritual order of things. The God who is ethical Ground of the world guarantees the validity and persistence of the ethical values; and it is in and through man's relation to God, the perfect Good, that the ethical ideal can be transcended and completed. The moral end cannot be stated in an absolute form, because morality itself is not absolute and final: it is a phase of spiritual life which points beyond itself and comes to its goal in religion. And the goal to which religion points is supramundane, a transcendent realm in which man's moral endeavour passes into a higher fulfilment, into communion with the Source and End of all goodness. From this point of view the moral life is a temporal aspect of the religious life, and finds its end and justification in religion; while religion in its turn gives to morality a supersensuous goal and a deeper meaning. Religion gives the ground and the guarantee of the ethical values; and ethical duties, covering as they do the wide field of human relations, lend content to the religious will. A moral duty is likewise a religious duty, and our religious service has its moral aspect. Hence it is not possible to draw a hard and fast line of distinction between the two spheres, and to say, for example, this question is purely religious and that is purely ethical. The two domains pass into one another; and the difference is not so much in their object-matter as in the point of view from which it is regarded and the meaning which is read into it. For both ethics and religion personal lives are the centres of value, but the personal life means more in the one case than in the other. We may regard ethics and religion as respectively a lower and a higher level of human experience, the lower leading up to the higher; and only when we consciously rise to the higher can we discern the full significance of the lower. Whatever distinctions we draw between morals and religion we must not ignore their deeper unity: they are stages of the developing spiritual life of man who moves upward to his divine goal. Any attempt to divide them, and to

oppose the one to the other, rests on a fragmentary and superficial conception of human nature.

(*c*) The historical relations of Religion to Art in some points resemble those of Religion to Morality. In both cases the relationship to religion is closest at the stage of National Religion. At this period neither æsthetic nor ethical values are sharply distinguished from and contrasted with religious values. But as civilisation grew in complexity it had for its consequence an increased internal differentiation; and in modern times art and morality alike have asserted their independence of religion. Yet in the case of art too, we shall discover behind the contrast an underlying affinity with religion.

We can scarcely speak of a relation of art to religion in primitive culture. While morality in its undeveloped form of custom was necessary to the order and maintenance of early society, the same cannot be said of art. Moreover, the growth of artistic faculties requires a more assured and stable basis of life than the tribal group possessed. So far back, indeed, as late paleolithic times man carved the figures of the animals he hunted on fragments of their tusks and horns, or painted them on the walls of the caves in which he dwelt. But these early efforts are purely imitative, and seem to possess no religious significance.[1] Only when we come down to the beginnings of civilisation do we meet with a conscious and sustained endeavour to employ art in the service of religion. The plastic arts were the first to be used by man in his endeavour to honour his gods. In building temples for their abode and decorating them for their worship, in carving statues of them to express their

[1] One cannot examine the reproductions of the engravings and paintings found in the caves of Altamira in Spain and La Madeleine in France (they are given by Dr. Sollas in his work on *Ancient Hunters*) without being impressed by the genuine artistic interest they reveal. Dr. Sollas mentions —*op. cit.* pp. 245–246—that M. Salomon Reinach believes the figures had a magical significance. This may be so, but it does not explain them. A poor daub or a rude image would suffice for magical purposes according to savage ideas.

character and office and to bring them near to the minds of those who did them reverence, he was striving to make art subserve the purposes of religion. In the works of art thus dedicated to religious uses great differences in the feeling for æsthetic values are displayed by different nations. The statues and temples reared by the Babylonians and the Assyrians impress us by their vastness and monotony, not by their beauty. In ancient Egypt, art was developed on similar lines. Here we find symbolism worked out in massive forms, significant of mystery and suggestive of the triumph of life over death, rather than a feeling for the beautiful in itself. A vital development of art is not possible apart from imaginative power and sympathy, and an intuitive feeling for what is harmonious and expressive. Where religion is cast in an unimaginative and utilitarian mould, as in ancient Rome and China, art remains on the whole in the background: the dominant religious values do not lend themselves to fine artistic expression. Greece is the conspicuous illustration of the interpenetration of æsthetic and religious feeling, and of the free use of artistic forms to reveal religious values. The native feeling of the Greeks for symmetry, rhythm, and harmonious synthesis was embodied in the structure of temples and in the forms of gods and goddesses, and for the first time there was disclosed the significance of beauty in religion. Hegel, it is well known, termed Greek religion the "Religion of Beauty," and in this connexion he made the penetrating remark: "It may be specially noted that *beautiful* art can only belong to those religions in which the spiritual principle, though concrete and intrinsically free, is not yet absolute."[1] Or, as we should rather put it, the fusion of religion with beauty was so fully achieved in Greece, because the Greek spirit was possessed by the feeling of the immanence of the divine rather than its transcendence. The beautiful form was the direct representation of the divine: it sought to satisfy by its own completeness

[1] *Philosophy of Mind*, Wallace's translation, p. 172.

rather than to suggest the unrealised. The Zeus of Phidias expressed in a wonderful way, we may well believe, the majesty of the Ruler of gods and of men. But no sensuous form can reveal the depths of the divine nature; and when the religious consciousness of humanity advanced to a higher stage, the visible presentation of Deity was felt to be painfully inadequate. No finite form can manifest Him "whom no man hath seen nor indeed can see." Schiller has given touching utterance to the haunting regret for that vanished world of fair forms, human yet divine:

> "Schöne Welt, wo bist du? Kehre wieder
> Holdes Blüthenalter der Natur!
> Ach, nur in dem Feenland der Lieder
> Lebt noch deine fabelhafte Spur."

The Gods of Greece became spectral figures, and gradually disappeared before the growing light of a new spiritual day.

Christianity represents a new attitude to the world, and the Christian faces the problem of life in a temper and spirit which make the Greek blending of art and religion impossible.[1] The Greek harmony of nature and spirit was a beautiful episode soon left behind by the onward movement of human experience. Instead of harmony, Christianity saw sin and discord in a world which had travelled far from the innocence of Eden: from the evil in and around him man must be redeemed and find his goal in a transcendent realm. The true treasure of the soul was in heaven, and to delight in fair forms was to idolise the elements of a world which was destined soon to pass away. And though this early antagonism to art was slowly softened, yet all through the Middle Ages the note of dissatisfaction with the merely phenomenal persists, and the desire of the heart is set on a spiritual realm beyond the seen and temporal. Art, as it developed in mediæval times, became charged with a new significance,

[1] The sense of the incompatibility of the Greek and the Christian spirit is finely suggested in Goethe's poem, "Die Braut von Corinth."

and was made to symbolise the rise of the soul to the invisible and eternal. Gothic cathedral, statues and pictures of Virgin and Saviour, saint and martyr, the great poem of Dante, all suggest the upward movement of the soul from the earth and the fetters of sense to its true home in heaven. And though modern Christendom has qualified this 'other worldliness' of the Middle Age, it still maintains the transcendent aspect of the spiritual life, and enjoins its people to remember that 'here they can have no continuing city' but must 'seek one to come.' Hence art for us may symbolise and suggest spiritual truth; but it cannot explicitly reveal it. To put it otherwise: art may be the handmaid of religion, but religion must be supreme in the spiritual house.

The association of art with religion which is so notable among the civilised peoples cannot be accidental. This conjunction points to an inward affinity and sympathy between the two, whereby the one aids the other in gaining a greater expressiveness and influence on the spiritual life. Art makes worship more suggestive and impressive, while religion imparts a purifying and uplifting motive to art. The fact that the two should help each other in this fashion implies something common in their methods and their aims, something akin in their attitude to the world and life. Art and religion both work through the imagination, vivifying experience by lending to it a significance beyond that of the moment. Neither the one nor the other can live in the region of pure thought: the æsthetic mind has its sensuous intuitions, and the religious mind envisages the things of the spirit in imaginative representations drawn from the world of sense. It has been remarked that there could not be any deep significance in the relation of art to religion, if the end of art was the mere imitation or copying of reality. And the remark is just. The accurate photograph is useful, but it lacks æsthetic value; art begins when man goes beyond what is outwardly given and reveals its expressiveness for the sympathetic mind. The lowly origins of religion

connect themselves with an instinctive sympathy for nature, in virtue of which early man read human meanings into its moving forces. And the æsthetic vision postulates a kind of sympathy or *rapport* with things by means of which they yield their secret to the discerning mind. To the magic of this mood even the 'meanest flower that blows' can yield a message. German writers have tried to express this attitude of soul by the word *Einfühlung*, which is certainly suggestive, though it leaves out of sight elements other than feeling in the artistic intuition.[1] On this basis of sympathetic insight the artist, by uniting form and content in a living way, strives to make things spiritually expressive to us. From the formal point of view a work of art is a grouping of elements in a significant whole. For example, the musician uses a multiplicity of single tones, so relating them one to another in a coherent structure that they convey a musical impression or meaning. The painter works out his design by means of a variety of colours and a just distribution of light and shade, and thus gives a consistent presentation of the beautiful. On its formal side, art is harmonious synthesis; and if the æsthetic scheme includes discords, they must fall within and emphasise the expressive whole. But art is more than obedience to formal conditions: it requires the living intuition and the intimate feeling of the artist to animate his materials and make them suggestive. The inner experience and vision of the discerning mind must be "wedded to this goodly universe," and from this harmonious marriage is born the light of beauty which transfigures the common things of earth. So art helps nature, and the artistic spirit reveals what otherwise

[1] The term *Einfühlung* has been used more especially by Lipps, who distinguishes two forms, a general and a special. Perhaps it is not altogether fanciful to find a parallel in religion, where an instinctive sympathy with nature engendered animism, while a further act of selective sympathy yielded determinate objects of worship. H. Maier (*Psychologie des Emotionalen Denkens*, pp. 479, 485) prefers the term *Einschauung*.

would remain hidden to the commonplace and casual eye. Art is reality transfigured by the artist and offered to the many :—

> "Art was given for that ;
> God uses us to help each other so,
> Lending our minds out."

Of the artist, the musician, and the poet it has been said : "They teach us, they help us, backward younger brothers, to see, to hear, to feel what our rude senses had failed to detect. They enact the miracle of the loaves and fishes again and again : out of the limited things of every-day they produce a bread of life in which the generations continue to find nourishment." [1]

The subjective element—the sympathetic intuition of the æsthetic mind—plays an important part in artistic production and interpretation. And the enjoyment of art depends on the capacity of the observer or listener to enter into the spiritual mood or impression it is meant to reveal. There will necessarily be variety in the spiritual meanings which different minds find in the creations of poets, painters, and musicians, a variety corresponding to the degrees of sympathetic discernment. In the case of music especially, the flexibility of interpretation is very great, for music, it has been said, is the pure language of feeling. There are *nuances* in the feeling-life which defy verbal expression ; and if the appeal of music has in it something vague and elusive, this is more than atoned for by the wealth of emotion and the range of suggestion which it provokes in the spirit that is finely touched by it :

> "The rest may reason and welcome ; 'tis we musicians know."

Through its infinite capacity for suggestion, art comes into close contact with religion. For art, like religion, strives to reveal the higher meaning of life, and seeks to lift the soul above the flat and commonplace region where it is so prone to rest. Art so represents beauty

[1] Wallace, Introductory Essays to Hegel's *Philosophy of Mind*, p. xlii.

that the sympathetic eye discerns in it the image of a supersensible reality. Hence it calls for keener vision and quicker sympathy, that things seen and heard may yield a revelation of the unseen and eternal. The suggestiveness of art lies in its symbolism; and it is in virtue of this symbolic function that it can join hands with religion in aiding the upward movement of the soul in worship. Spiritualised emotion is essential to worship in its higher and purer forms; and it is because art can be the means of evoking and directing this movement of the feelings, and promoting the rise of the mind to a spiritual reality, that it has become so closely associated with religion. Not by accident or in error has the Christian Church drawn into its service the best works in the plastic arts, in painting, and in music. By calling to its aid the rich resources of art, the Church felt that worship was made more uplifting, suggestive, and impressive.

When the intellectual aspect of religion is greatly accentuated, there is a natural tendency to depreciate the service which art can render to religion. Art works through sensuous forms, while religion, it is said, is in spirit and in truth. So a recent writer has argued that, as religion becomes more spiritual, the place of art in the cultus falls into the background.[1] One would infer then that the union of religion with art is a stage in the evolution of the religious consciousness which is being transcended. This view seems to be mistaken. Were religion essentially a satisfaction of the thinking self, it would be feasible to draw the conclusion that art had no enduring office in worship. It would fall into the category of those 'childish things' which the full grown spiritual man puts away. But we need hardly repeat that pure thought can never make religion; and since the flow of feeling and the upward movement of the soul are deeply involved in a spiritual worship, art will always have a rightful place in the cultus. There have been

[1] A. Dorner, *Grundriss der Religionsphilosophie*, 1903, p. 399.

times in the history of the Christian Church when beauty was regarded with indifference, or even treated as antagonistic to true piety. The motives which prompted this hostility are intelligible. Men believed they were contending for purity of worship against idolatry; and when they supposed they possessed all truth in a clear-cut dogmatic scheme, the office of symbolism was superfluous. A religion thus circumscribed, austere, and definite, had its drawbacks as well as its advantages. Piety was cast too much in an intellectual mould, the devotional spirit was impoverished, and religion tended to lose its intimate relation to the needs and interests of common life. The modern mind inclines to demand a richer content for the spiritual life, and to accept as helpful all influences which serve to realise this end. Moreover, the tendency to recognise a symbolic element in theological dogmas in itself brings religion into closer touch with art, and prompts those who sympathise to regard both as fellow-labourers in the prophetic office. After all, in this life we 'see through a glass darkly,' and shall no doubt continue to do so: and the voices which whisper to us of what is beyond, and the influences which purify the heart and elevate the thoughts and feelings above the things of sense, minister to the Godward movement of the soul. It would be futile to deny, however, that the modern assertion of the independence and self-sufficiency of art, and the modern cry of 'art for art's sake,' contain elements of danger to religion. For art, whatever it may do, can never take the place of religion, and exercise a redemptive influence on average men and women on its own account; it lacks that directly ethical and practical side which is so characteristic of religion. Excessive devotion to the æsthetic side of worship will always be fraught with a certain peril to the interests of genuine religion, because it leads the individual to ignore the essential relation of worship to life. Piety means to act and serve as well as to contemplate and enjoy. In some instances individuals who have lost all

faith in religious doctrine and teaching continue to find an æsthetic value in the forms and the ritual of religion, and on this account pay it the tribute of an outward respect. In these cases, though the form of religion survives, the function has vanished. One cannot state the truth too clearly, that if art is to co-operate with religion to the good of the latter, it must be on terms which the spiritual interests of religion prescribe. As the late Bishop Westcott has happily put it, the place and office of art in religion are *ministerial*. "In every form, music, painting, sculpture, it must point beyond the immediate effect. As long as it suggests the aspiration 'to Thy great glory, O Lord,' it is not only an offering but a guide and a support. When it appears to be an end idolatry has begun."[1] For this reason the association of religion with realistic and sensational forms of art which aim at 'immediate effect' is calculated to degrade and not to help religion; they cannot but offend and repel a spiritual mind. Such art may be congenial to a superstitious and orgiastic cult, but it cannot minister to pure religion and undefiled. Nevertheless symbolic and spiritually suggestive art will have an enduring religious value, for it is prophetic of a world beyond the veil of sense and a faithful minister to the soul's converse with the things above. Art, like religion and morality, springs from the spiritual element in human nature: all are intimately linked with the purposive life of the spirit which is devoted to ideal ends.

C.—Religion and Culture.

We can now try to gather up and present some general conclusions in regard to the place of religion in the life of culture. That religion is a normal aspect of that life is abundantly plain, and will only be denied by those who cannot see the facts in a dispassionate

[1] Essay on "Christianity and Art," in edition of the *Epistles of St. John*, p. 373.

light. Religion has many stages and forms, and its message varies when we pass from age to age and race to race. But it is a continuous presence among men, and whether in rude and stammering tones or in refined speech, it expresses man's answer to the problem of his existence and his destiny. It grows just because it is the expression of the human spirit which is involved in a process of growth. The course of development, however, brings with it expansion and articulation of the structure of society, and so has raised the question of the way in which religion is distinguished from and related to the other elements and aspects of the social life. Some answer to this question we have just tried to give. And I trust one outcome of the discussion will be, to set the nature of religion in somewhat sharper relief. For the theory is perfectly sound, that you cannot know any one thing well except you go beyond it and apprehend its relations to other things. A discussion of the bearing of religion on the other sides of the social life is at the same time a means of increasing our discernment of its proper nature. We must, however, bear in mind that the distinction of factors in the social whole does not mean their separation. Religion, because it is a factor in the social life, must interact with the other factors, both giving to them and receiving from them. This interaction is the condition of development: isolation means the failure of stimulus and consequent stagnation.

Nevertheless it is true and important that religion, while it enters into and plays a part in the life of culture, cannot be fully understood and characterised in terms of that culture. In other words, religion cannot be adequately treated as a phenomenon whose significance is exhausted by its office in the structure of human society. The point was merely mentioned earlier in the chapter, and I now take the opportunity of making some further observations. What is called the 'functional' view of religion at present finds favour with psychologists and sociologists. It seems to bring religion into line with the evolutionary process,

and to give it a biological and psychological justification. Religion has its use in the struggle for existence, in the endeavour after life-conservation. For it imports into society certain beliefs and sanctions which conduce to social efficiency; and in this, rather than its ultimate truth, lies its value. Religion, it is urged, is the offspring of the 'will to live'—a will operative in the beginnings of culture and still active in the wider system of civilised society. Religion functions like a kind of protective variation developed by the social organism to aid it in the task of self-preservation. That is to say, it is a functional development of the social organism, and, like all such developments, its scope and meaning are to be found in the way in which it helps to vitalise and conserve the parent structure. This theory, with its ostensible scientific basis, is at first sight plausible, but further reflexion discloses serious objections to it. This hypothesis, if accepted, reduces religion to a mere means: the norm is the well-being of the social system, which is made the end of the individual life. The personal and inward side of religion is merged and lost in the collective, which is represented by a mundane social order. It is relevant therefore to reply, that the sociological interpretation of religion does injustice to the inner spirit and movement of the religious consciousness. For that movement, which is explicitly revealed in the Universal Religions, has been in the direction of emphasising the inward and personal aspect of religion. Christianity teaches that the value of the soul cannot be measured by any earthly good; and while the Christian life gains content in moral and social duties, it has a personal value and destiny which transcend any given social system. Unless, then, we are prepared to discount the whole tendency and aspiration of the human spirit, we are bound to proclaim the inadequacy of the sociological theory of religion. Whether the transcendent aspiration of the religious spirit is justified is another question, but that it belongs to the meaning of religion revealed in its development cannot fairly be denied. And

if so, you set out from an arbitrary and defective idea of what religion is, if you are to interpret it to be certain beliefs and acts imposed by society on its members with a view to its own preservation and progress. It may be true that these beliefs often operate in the manner described: that, of course, will depend on the type of religion to which they belong and the character of the particular society in which they exist. Where, for instance, religion has become identified with habits of asceticism and withdrawal from the world, we cannot call it a useful social function. And if the meaning of religion were exhausted by its social function, faith which goes beyond the world would lack any ground for its rise and persistence. We do not seem to enter into the 'true inwardness' of spiritual religion, unless we realise that it carries with it the denial of the finality and sufficiency of the earthly and temporal order of things. It is only up to a point that you can understand religion as a serviceable factor in human culture. For human culture is not the ultimate ground and standard of spiritual value.

But if the goal to which religion points does not fall within the system of culture, its bearing on the elements of that system is none the less intimate. Spiritual religion is characterised by comprehensiveness of outlook, and nothing in the wide field of human activity is alien to it. Its interest is in life and the ultimate meaning and destiny of life; so it seeks to connect the multiplicity of human ends with man's supreme vocation of realising his religious end. Man's varied interests, scientific, æsthetic, ethical, and social, are all valid and worthy; yet the message of religion is that he must not rest in them, but move through them to a satisfaction of his nature more complete and fundamental. That satisfaction, in virtue of the fact that it is so comprehensive, will be correspondingly rich and full, and no side of his spiritual nature should be suppressed or mutilated. Thought, feeling, and will all go to the making of religion, and in the final good of the soul each must come to its due. But that this goal lies beyond the temporal

and sensuous limitations of our present existence-form is the message of higher religion. Hence religion by its ideal scope and meaning distinguishes itself from the other phases of culture. The latter are directed to lesser ends and governed by narrower interests, and for this reason they can be embraced in the supreme end given by religion. Through the various forms of culture man can promote the growth and fulness of his life: in religion he finds the meaning and purpose of life itself.

I would follow out this line of thought by suggesting that the purely historic treatment of religion is not in itself sufficient. The value of such a treatment within its limits is transparent and not to be gainsaid. Indeed the study of the empirical sources and the conditions under which a religion develops in time, is indispensable to its full understanding. For religion, being a factor in culture, is a continuous growth, and influences from the past and present give form and colour to the spiritual consciousness. In the case of religions which have been founded, the historical facts in connexion with their foundation are very important and influential. Yet the attempt to make a single historic period the exclusive and exhaustive test and norm of what a religion ought always to be has led to many difficulties and perplexities. For religion is affected by the evolution of the culture-system in which it plays a part; and the endeavour to make an earlier phase the complete type for a later has led to much perverted ingenuity, insincerity, and the suppression of conviction. People who set out to find in the past an explanation and justification for what is done in the present can generally find what they seek. It is notorious, for example, how widely divergent Christian sects can justify their existence from the pages of Scripture. In this way meanings and ideas have been read into the beginnings of a religion which, it is safe to say, were remote from the minds of its founder and his followers. This method, though it pretends to be historical, is really unhistorical; and the norm by which its votaries judge and justify, while nominally simple and well-

defined, is in practice too elastic to be trustworthy. It is often difficult to say where history ends and legend begins, as the modern mind is coming to recognise. But even when you have succeeded in determining certain facts to be historic, it is a fallacy to suppose that these facts must have a certain fixed value for every system of culture. Value is not a stereotyped magnitude apart from the spiritual life of persons and the system in which they live and move. The past as it is in itself is elusive; it comes to us reflected in the spiritual life of the present. How else can we explain those subtle variations of the religious ideal which have marked the historic development of a religion! The image of the past, as Eucken has said, takes different forms according to the conviction of spiritual truth in the present.[1] Even the intuition of genius cannot restore to us the very form and pressure of a bygone age's life, and historic facts only become significant for us in the medium of present values.

I will conclude this chapter by referring to another fallacy. Those who regard religion as a function of society and a mere phase of human culture often justify themselves by explaining its growth and changes through the category of causality. The onward movement and the variations of religion are assumed to be so many effects which can be referred for explanation to its past history and its present environment. Social and economic conditions, past and present, are hypostatised as influences which somehow bring about changes in religion. Now in what sense the past can be a cause remains quite obscure, and to regard religion as a kind of substance which can receive and reveal influences imparted to it from without, is a fallacy whose grossness is concealed by a familiar habit of language. The word influence is a very convenient one; but it is used loosely, and it is sometimes necessary to ask ourselves what we mean when we use it. For there is a way of mistaking words for realities which is a constant source of error and confusion. What then do we mean

[1] *Hauptprobleme der Religionsphilosophie*, p. 61.

when we speak of an influence on religion? If we consider what we say, we recognise that religion is not an object but an aspect of the mind, not a substance but a form of spiritual life. An influence on religion is therefore neither more nor less than an influence on religious persons. Now, when we talk of an influence on the mind, the analogy of one body producing an effect upon another is quite out of place: the principle of mechanical connexion does not rule in the realm of spirit. What we call an effect in this reference is really a responsive activity of the human mind: the influence so called is made an influence by the working of the mind. Hence the scientific method which spells out external causes for the making of religion is reversing the true order. These so-called causes depend for their influence on the human spirit which invests them with meaning and vitality. Apart from the living minds of men they would cease to be real and effective. Therefore the centre and source of the activity from which religious phenomena proceed must be found in personal spirits who are religious. Hence every attempt to explain and construe spiritual movements in society through subpersonal categories will fail in the end. This will appear more clearly in the discussion of religious development which follows.

If one were to use an image to suggest the significance of religion in culture, it would be the image of the soul and body. The culture-system is, so to speak, the organism, and religion is the inspiring spirit which gives meaning and direction to the whole. In themselves the various factors of the social life may be regarded as means to the realisation of the higher values. It is the characteristic of spiritual religion to relate the values realised in human life to an ultimate and supreme Value. This final Value is not a temporal but a transcendent Good. Hence religion, while it vitalises human culture, also points to a goal beyond this temporal order of things.

CHAPTER V.

RELIGIOUS DEVELOPMENT.

It is a common observation that you only know how much is in a thing when you see what comes out of it. The seed reveals its nature in the plant, and the infant is explained by the full-grown man. Things, so to speak, disclose themselves in the course of their working, and the more we know about their way of working the better we seem to know the things. To put it tersely, we come to understand objects by studying their evolution. The wide vogue of the evolutionary method was a cardinal feature of scientific and philosophic thought in the Nineteenth Century, and the method was rich in suggestion and fruitful in results. For if evolution did not solve the problem of origins, it cast a new and welcome light on the presence as well as the function and value of many of the characters which distinguish various forms of organic beings. What was unintelligible on the assumption of the fixity of types became intelligible from the point of view of development. Inspired by the triumphs achieved, hopeful people spoke as if evolution was a key to all mysteries; and a method worked with success in the realm of nature was boldly applied in the social and spiritual sphere. Nor is there any need to cavil at the extension of a method successfully followed in one sphere to another, provided you are clear about the meaning of the terms you use and can justify the way in which you apply them. Unfortunately in the case of words which are in the mouth of every one, usage easily becomes loose and significance ill-defined; and names like 'evolution'

and 'development,' in popular and even in scientific writing, have not a certain connotation. When we speak of the *development* of a plant, a man, and a religion, it is essential to remember that we do not mean exactly the same thing in each case. The subject is one on which we must try to think clearly, and so I shall begin by discussing briefly

A.—The General Nature of Spiritual Development.

By spiritual development I mean the development of human minds and wills, in contrast to the form of growth which obtains in the animal and vegetable world. It is necessary that we should distinguish the one from the other, for the meaning of the process is not the same in each case. When we are dealing with history we are dealing with that of which the essence is psychical process in men; and, as was pointed out at the close of the preceding chapter, these processes cannot be understood from the naturalistic standpoint. Some have been inclined to believe that in the movements of history and the growth of society the operations of desires and motives could be construed by extending the principle of cause and effect which worked in a fixed and necessary way in the natural world. To naturalistic and positivist writers the idea was congenial, and the uniformities of society were thought to be no more than an amplification of the reign of law in nature. J. S. Mill, in his *Logic*, has given us an outline of the application of scientific logic to the moral sciences, and writers like Comte and Herbert Spencer treated the question from the same standpoint. Of course it was apparent that social and historical phenomena could not be predicted with anything like the accuracy of natural phenomena. A revolution cannot be foretold like an eclipse. But it was possible to invoke the science of Statistics to show certain broad uniformities did exist, and it was open to suggest that failure to predict was due to the great complexity of the causes which were involved. The difficulty, so Mill asserted, was the same

difficulty which existed in meteorology; and as in the latter increasing knowledge of the complicated causes would yield increasing accuracy of foreknowledge, so would it be in the domain of society. In the result, historic and social phenomena were claimed to be an extension of the same necessarily determined order of events and amenable to the same treatment by strictly scientific methods.

The weakness of this theory was its defective psychology, and its imperfect conception of what spiritual activity really meant. Human motives were thought to be the natural reaction of the mind on the environment: they reflected the conditions and circumstances in which men were placed, and operated with unfailing regularity in bringing about fixed results. The dependence of desires and motives on self-consciousness for their character was ignored; motives and actions were illegitimately identified with causes and effects; man's self-determining function was misunderstood, and he was reduced to a link in the chain of events. A truer psychology shows that mechanical causation is inapplicable to spiritual process, and the man himself makes his motives. But if man is not determined from without, if he determines himself, then the attempt to bring the historic process into line with the natural must break down. For the cardinal fact of the freedom of the self has not received due recognition, and the place of the will in development has not been understood.

In contrast to the naturalistic conception of development is the idealistic. The idealist approaches the problem from the other side. The term 'idealist' is vague, but what I refer to is the type of idealism which had its beginnings in Plato and Aristotle, and, continued by Leibniz, found its fullest expression in the work of Hegel. Aristotle had conceived the process of organic growth to be the realisation of a typical form potential in the germ (*δυνάμει*), and passing through a series of fixed stages to its expression in the fully articulated individual (*ἐνεργείᾳ*). Here the controlling principle is teleological, a final cause (*τὸ οὗ ἕνεκα*), not a mechanical. In his

theory of the monad, a simple substance essentially active, Leibniz employed the Aristotelian conceptions of potentiality and actuality. From the first the monad was potentially all it came to be, and by a determinate and continuous course of development it actively evolved the whole wealth of its experience. The Leibnizian notion of spiritual development was strictly individualistic; and naturally so, for the system excluded interaction, and 'the monads had no windows.' It was reserved for Hegel to make a large and impressive endeavour to apply an idealistic theory of development to social and historical phenomena; and the Hegelian philosophy of history is a justification of the fine saying of Leibniz—"The present is great with the past and full of the future." Into the details of Hegel's historical philosophy I cannot enter, and I will confine myself to one aspect of his theory of spiritual development. Hegel believed that if you regard the history of mankind, or if you turn to some specific aspect of culture, say Law, Religion, or Philosophy, you will find that development in each case follows a determinate order and moves dialectically to its predetermined goal. That goal was implicit in the beginning, and each stage of evolution was in necessary relation to the past and to the future. Hence spiritual evolution for Hegel was a movement in which the whole wealth of meaning immanent in the germ gradually explicated itself and came to its fruition. There is nothing contingent in the process: each stage is part of a dialectical structure, and is conditioned by what has gone before and by what is to come. The Hegelian conception of historical development has fascinated and inspired many minds. It rightly recognises that the movement of history cannot be understood from the naturalistic standpoint: the controlling power is always mind or spirit, which is self-determined, and embraces the so-called natural order within itself. Hegel also emphasises the truth, that there must be continuity in the process if there is to be meaning in it. And finally, he insists that the goal cannot be problematic or

uncertain, if reason is supreme and immanent in the world. On the other hand, the difficulties in the way of a whole-hearted acceptance of the theory are very great. I shall say nothing at present of the ambiguous and thoroughly unsatisfactory manner in which Hegel speaks of the process advancing stage by stage in time, and then, when seen *sub specie æternitatis*, as timelessly complete. But it ought to be noticed that, on the Hegelian view, historic development, though spiritual, is still rigidly determined and admits of no contingency at any point. The process is conscious, but it runs on with the mechanical fixity of a machine. You cannot consistently carry out this conception in practice without robbing history of its human interest and value, without turning it into a dreary pageant where the actors recite mechanically the words prepared for them. Hence the value of personal initiative does not receive full recognition, and historic personalities become merely the instruments of the collective will. Moreover, the sin, failure, and loss which play so large a part in the human drama are transformed into a process of good in the making: if we only knew it, they are helpful elements in a world where everything is for the best—a gospel which would be comforting if it could be reconciled with facts. There is also another difficulty which it is important for us to note in the present connexion. Hegel seems to have thought that dialectic development is a feature both of culture as a whole, and of the different factors within the life of culture. Historic culture develops dialectically, we are told, and so do its specific phases, such as religion and philosophy, which have their own stages of evolution. The part no doubt must share the movement of the whole, but it does not follow that the two movements are parallel. Is the assumed dialectical development of culture necessarily present in its differentiations? It appears to us to be wrong to suppose that philosophy or religion determines the form of its own development apart from interaction with the life of society. For the social life is

more than a supporting environment to religion; it often goes far to determine the particular forms which religion assumes. To put the case in another way: we say that spiritual development is not of ideas but in minds; and no aspect of the mind develops apart from the rest. Let it be freely granted that human minds evolve and transmit philosophical and religious ideas in a connected fashion, the truth remains that these ideas are not merely related the one to the other, but are influenced always by the total contents of consciousness. Or, what comes to the same thing, the development of religion in society is constantly affected by interaction with other elements within the social system: it is not a movement whose explanation lies wholly within itself.

The foregoing critical remarks will perhaps serve to show the direction in which, as we think, a truer notion of spiritual development is to be found. The explanation we are seeking must in the first instance be based on the psychical nature of man, for the core of the historic process is the activity of personal minds. The secret of spiritual progress is not to be traced to general principles or categories, but to the character and working of those individual centres of experience that constitute society. It is a complete reversal of the true method of historic explanation to formulate laws of progress, and then to try to show that social evolution must conform to them. Laws can only be general statements based on experience. Even in the physical world, laws are just generalised expressions for observed uniformities; and in the spiritual world these uniformities are less rigorously fulfilled, and may more fitly be termed general tendencies. These tendencies are the outcome and expression of personal minds working together, and are not in any sense prior to them. What then are the features of psychical life of which spiritual development is the issue? Beyond a doubt a central feature of life, and especially of conscious life, is its purposive character: it is quite inexplicable by the action of some *vis a tergo*. Even in the lower

organisms, reactions are purposive in the sense that they are directed to the conservation of life, and the whole working of instinct has reference to individual and racial ends. Out of instinct, by a continuous process of growth, has emerged the higher purposive activity which involves reflexion and deliberation, and, in the case of civilised man, takes the form of direction to far-reaching ends and ideal aims. This forward-looking tendency is a note of all life, but when we descend the scale of culture the instinctive aspect prevails more and more over the reflective. The purposive must not be identified with the deliberate. The great mass of our social heritage has been the fruit, not of clear-sighted invention, but of a spontaneous growth where selection worked with no prevision of distant issues. Perhaps the most important of the instruments of human culture is language; and the point before us could not be better illustrated than by the evolution of language, which was the outcome of a continuous and almost unconscious process of adjustment to human needs. The same is true to a large extent of custom and social organisation. In these cases, though the result was not the object of conscious design, still it was the fruit of a silent process of selection and preference carried out in detail, and the complete structure is justly termed a teleological whole. Social growths, therefore, must be judged teleologically, and this because the activity of the formative factor is purposive throughout. Purpose, then, is inherent in the spiritual development of man, but the purpose only rises to clear consciousness in the later stages of development.

Scientific causality, we have already argued, does not suffice to explain historic phenomena. When we are dealing with purposive movements the category by which we judge will be that of value; for ends which are objects of endeavour are values, and the means which lead to their attainment become secondary or instrumental values. To decide, therefore, whether a given movement is progressive or no is to answer the question whether it

reveals an increasing value or not. But we cannot fix values without some standard of value by which we determine the relative worth of different stages of the movement. So, in the long run, we must have some ultimate value which will form the basis and test of the system of values which we apply to experience. The philosopher, at all events, who wants to go to the root of things, recognises the need, though the ordinary historian may not raise the question. The latter is often content to form his appreciation of a movement or an epoch by reference to some idea of value more or less current, such as individual liberty or collective happiness; and so competent historians sometimes differ very widely in their valuation of a historic episode. The reason is they appeal to different standards of value. Thus one writer hails the Reformation as a great spiritual emancipation, while another sees in it the seeds of religious disintegration and decay. Hence different schools of historians may apply different principles of valuation, and the question of ultimate consistency will fall into the background. On the other hand, when we take up the large problem of the reality and continuity of spiritual development, the need for a consistent principle which will ensure consistent judgments is apparent. It is not enough, for instance, to declare, that from one point of view a movement spells progress and from another decline. We wish to know which point of view is the more adequate and upon which side the verdict falls. Moreover, although you determine that certain epochs are progressive when judged in relation to others, this is not sufficient to show that the whole movement is one of progress. To make sure of this we must be sure that there is a continuity in the process, that values realised are conserved, and that the end is better than the beginning. A comprehensive judgment of this kind will always be difficult: it is not possible unless the thinker has an ultimate standard of value which he can apply all along the line, and so be able to say that, though certain epochs are reactionary and

retrograde, the movement in its totality is progressive. We are driven, therefore, beyond the relative point of view to one which we take to be final and complete. But here again we are confronted with a problem to the perplexing nature of which I have already referred in the previous chapter. I mean the difficulty of forming a coherent conception of the ultimate value or ideal which is the goal of human development. Temporal process enters into the substance of history, and if historic values are to be conserved, time cannot be made fictitious or illusory. Yet no ideal state under the present time-form would finally satisfy the desires and aspirations of human nature as we know it; and we cannot consistently conceive an unending movement to be the best. If there be an answer to this problem it must be found in the region of metaphysics, and into this domain the study of spiritual development brings us at the last.

There is a further truth which calls for emphasis in this preliminary statement. We cannot appeal to some immanent principle which guarantees progress, and by its working carries society inevitably forward to some high destiny. Some speak glibly as if progress were a law of human history; but no dispassionate study of the facts will justify this assertion. If civilisations expand and blossom they also decay and dissolve, and visible gains are balanced by obvious losses.[1] Progress, we may well agree, there has been in the past, but it has not been the outcome of any iron law; it is the fruit of human wills freely dedicating themselves to the good and accepting for their task the work of making things better. Development is the product not of laws but of persons, and it carries within it the witness of spiritual freedom. Progress, indeed, postulates human capacities and the call to realise them. With the individual, however, rests the free will to rise to the fulness of his vocation or to fall below it; and the spiritual development of society depends on the right

[1] An eminent historian of our time has said, that the progress of civilisation is matter of faith rather than knowledge.

use of freedom in its members. On the higher levels of civilisation historic movements are self-conscious processes, working themselves out in a series of oppositions and conflicts, and these sometimes attain the most far-reaching significance. Such historic crises can only be brought to a successful issue under the guidance of great personalities who see further than common men and act more decisively. The future depends on whether the need of a people can call forth these illuminating minds and directing wills, who conquer opposition and lead the way to an ampler spiritual good. It is an undue optimism to say that a society in its day of stress always produces the man who can rise to the height of the occasion and turn it to gain. Years come when there is no longer any 'open vision': the hour strikes but the man does not step forth. In these days of decline the spiritual forces run low and society lives on the heritage of the past. This dependence of progress on formative and governing minds serves to show that spiritual development is a task man must take upon himself, and to which he must dedicate his powers. The ideal is not an impersonal force moulding human wills to its use: it only 'moves as object of desire,' and it only prevails when men love it and freely devote themselves to it.

B.—The Religious Development of Man.

Religious development is a phase or special case of spiritual development, and the general features which characterise the latter are also present in the former. Though we commonly speak of the development of religion, if we are to be accurate we ought rather to say the religious development of man. For it is man who develops religion, and he develops it as an element in his complex spiritual life. Religion, then, which is a characteristic activity of the human mind, shares the mind's growth and is subject to interaction with the other mental elements. Like all spiritual development it is a development in persons, and must in the first instance be

interpreted psychologically. It follows, therefore, that any attempt to isolate religion and to treat it as though it had an independent and immanent law of growth within itself cannot succeed. This method involves a false abstraction at the outset, and it introduces into the subject an artificial simplicity which does not correspond to the concrete facts of experience. The human spirit which is religious is also active in science and art, in ethics and social life; and these manifold activities interact and influence one another. For example, we find features in the evolution of religion which are not to be explained directly by religious motives: they are due to the pressure of scientific or ethical ideas, or are the result of social changes.

When we speak of development we make certain postulates: we postulate something which can be regarded as a whole or unity; we postulate a continuity in the process of change within the whole, so that each step in the process is connected with what goes before and what comes after; and lastly, we postulate that the movement reveals a growth in value.[1] It is easily apparent that if any of these conditions is absent, the idea of a development disappears. A system which continuously deteriorated, or a series of unconnected movements, could not be said to develop. In regard to the first postulate, the subject of religious development, its nature will depend on the purpose we have on hand: it may be a tribal group or it may be a nation in which we desire to show that there has been a progress in religious ideas, and in these cases the unity to which reference is made is sufficiently clear. The case is more difficult when we speak of the religious development of man, for the unity we presuppose is not well-defined in space or time. Comparatively isolated and backward human groups have existed and still exist, and the point we select for a beginning from which to trace the process must be more or less arbitrary. Some groups do not advance, and in certain cases show tokens of deterioration, while in other social systems it may be hard to

[1] Cp. Simmel, *Probleme der Geschichtsphilosophie*, p. 148 ff.

decide whether there has been spiritual progress or not. Hence a phrase like 'the religious development of humanity' can never be strictly accurate. Still we may defend the use of the phrase if there have been contact and interaction of groups over a wide area, and if these peoples reveal in their history a continuity and growth of religious beliefs and practices. Even though this history contains periods of decadence and reaction, if they fall within and are subordinated to the larger movement of progress, it will still be admissible to speak of religious development. The essential point is that there be a continuity between the past and present, for this makes it possible to regard the process as a whole and to compare one stage with another.

Let us now consider what is meant by continuity in religious development. The analogy of the individual mind may help us here. In the matter of language, customs, and ideas, the single mind essentially depends on its social environment, and would be powerless without its spiritual heritage from the past. It constantly absorbs and receives stimulus from an intellectual atmosphere which it did not create, and apart from which it could not live. But the individual spirit also reacts on its social inheritance, exercises some selection on it, and is not at every point rigidly determined by it. Within the limits prescribed by general conditions, a principle of freedom is at work which forbids us to find the sufficient reason for every individual development in what has gone before. The self-conscious will does not create the possibilities of its own development: these are given by its own character in relation to its environment. But it can to some extent determine what possibilities are to become actual, and in this way combines in its action the principles of continuity and freedom. This illustration from the individual suggests how we should approach the larger problem of the religious evolution of man. The development of religious experience in a race requires continuity, but the continuity need not be that of organic growth.

In fact we have already argued that the notion of organic development, in the strict meaning of the term, is not applicable to spiritual phenomena. And a conception of the kind cannot be applied without violence to religious history; for while a particular religion preserves a tone and character of its own, there is no evidence to prove, and various reasons to disprove, that its whole subsequent history is foreshadowed in its rudimentary form. What that rudimentary form was it is often hard, and sometimes impossible, to define clearly; and the religious experience in its evolution undergoes modifications through the influence of other phases of the spiritual life. These modifications affect the content of the religion, but they cannot be regarded as involved in its beginning. It is, for instance, the mere semblance of an explanation to say, that the Universalism of the Hebrew prophets and the later Jewish Legalism were both developed from germs in primitive Jahvism. And it would be wasted ingenuity to try to show that the conception of the Catholic Church in the age of Hildebrand was a seed of promise contained in the gospel of Jesus!

The evolution of religion involves the operation of two factors, the collective and the individual; and the process is not intelligible unless we keep both in view. The collective factor is essential to the understanding of that continuity which exists between the different stages of a religion. It embraces all that we associate with the institutional side of religion—all that finds embodiment in rites and customs, cult-forms and doctrines. These change, yet only slowly, and they lend that common character to a religion which is discernible at very different periods of its history. Overwhelmingly strong in the lower levels of culture, the collective factor is afterwards affected to a greater degree by the growing power of personal spirits; but it is a vigorous factor to the last. Against radical reforms and revolutionary changes in the structure of religion, the collective or institutional factor can usually assert itself and prevent any violent break with the past.

This is intelligible when we remember how powerfully individuals are influenced by their religious environment. The influence of the environment they cannot escape, however strongly they may react on it. Luther in revolt from the Romish Church was still under the spell of the system against which he protested.[1] Again, however subversive of religious tradition may be the attitude of the reformer, he cannot initiate a movement which will grow and prosper unless he can enlist the interest and sympathy of the masses of men for his cause. Though he is a free critic of tradition they are not, and you cannot sway men save by ideas which appeal to them. The dependence of the individual on the support of the slowly moving many, is shown by the fact that when he throws out entirely novel and revolutionary ideas on religion, they seldom win their way. The religion of Positivism, though it has had able expounders, breaks too violently with the past. Consequently it has not that root in the traditional feelings of society which would enable it to become a vital and expanding faith. So the collective factor, by its stability, secures that change proceeds within limits which ensure the identity of religion and the continuity of its past and present forms. Moreover, seeing that religion is thoughout a social phenomenon, we can understand that the institutional factor should wield an influence persistent and pervasive. Hence, as has been said, although individuals powerfully assert their influence on religion, the tendencies to homogeneity and stability are still more powerful. These tendencies are always quickened in presence of rash innovation and radical criticism.[2]

Nevertheless the individual comes to play a very important part in the evolution of religion. In the religion of primitive groups and tribes his work in bringing about changes is lost to sight, and the collective or social influ-

[1] An apt illustration of this is the Lutheran doctrine of consubstantiation.

[2] The saying of Plutarch reveals the universal spirit of religious conservatism: *ἀρκεῖ γὰρ ἡ πάτριος καὶ παλαιὰ πίστις.*

ence is dominant. Change proceeds slowly and without observation, and the voice of the innovator and reformer is not heard. But with the growth of nations and civilised life there ensues a development of personal consciousness which has far-reaching results. The prophet and religious teacher begin to take a place in the spiritual drama, and the sway of unreasoned custom is broken. When the spirit of religion is reflected inward, personal experience and conviction begin to count in the making of piety, and the way is opened out for a fresh and freer movement within the religious society. Instead of remaining content to play a merely passive rôle, the individual begins to reflect and valuate, and in consequence to select and criticise. Great spiritual movements are nearly always due to the vivid experience and insight of men of religious genius, who discern the inner need of the age and people, and point the way to its fulfilment. These spiritually gifted men see further and deeper than others, and they communicate their vision to their fellows. This individual influence is most conspicuous in prophetic religions, and in the great universal religions which issued from the life and teaching of personal founders. The impressive figure of prophet and teacher, often magnified in the mist of legend and tradition, betokens a historic personality who was the fountain of a fresh spiritual impulse. And though the prophet belongs to his own environment and would be unintelligible in another, still the attempt to explain him through his surroundings does not succeed. At those critical points when, under the inspiration of genius, religion breaks into a new and wonderful life, the link with the past seems to be broken. But on mature reflexion we recognise there is no absolute break with what has gone before, and the prophet has not come to destroy but to fulfil. This will, I think, be clear when we remember how social conditions minister to the opportunity of spiritually gifted individuals. The inspired person must appeal to his age and respond to its need: the stimulus to his activity proceeds from the facts which

surround him and the ideas they suggest. He does not create the spiritual crisis, though he precipitates it and guides it to an issue. The personal life grows out of and draws its nourishment from the wider life of society, and the most original genius reflects the characteristics of his age and race. Even the religions which spring most directly from personal inspiration and initiative, must be the development of possibilities contained in the religious situation as a whole. This dependence of the individual is the guarantee that continuity will not fail; while the capacity of a race or nation to bring forth men of spiritual light and leading, gives the hope of religious progress.

Let us now consider briefly those general causes which stimulate the development of religion. They can, I think, be reduced to three: social changes and social intercourse, the growth of the ethical consciousness, and the increase of scientific knowledge.

(1) The most important of these social changes has been referred to in a previous chapter: it was the blending of tribes to form the nation. A deep and far-reaching transformation of this kind, bringing together as it did various deities and cults, was of the greatest consequence in the evolution of religion, and practically entailed the reorganisation of religious ideas. It is unnecessary to repeat what has already been said in this connexion: the point to be noted is, that this great forward movement in religion was conditioned and prepared for by a marked advance in culture which made an advance in religion necessary, and indeed inevitable. The stimulus did not proceed in the first instance from the religious consciousness. The rise of a new and complex social system created a need which the older religious conceptions could not satisfy, and the pressure of this felt want brought about a highly significant development of religion. Moreover, the organisation of civilised society gave the lead to the religious imagination, and it was reflected in the system of departmental deities, graduated in the order of their importance after the similitude of the earthly state. "The

rule of many is not good": this was man's experience on earth, and in accordance with it he fashioned the order of things in heaven and placed a supreme deity at the head of his pantheon. National religion was formed on a basis of tribal cults, while the growth of the national consciousness and experience was the organising spirit of the larger religious system. But the interaction of tribal cults conditioned the rise of the national form of religion, and interaction of religious worships is always an incentive to spiritual progress. The intercommunication of nations and races, especially when their religious systems were in the formative stage, produced a ferment of religious ideas which brought about changes and fresh combinations. Gods were borrowed, a native deity took on the attributes of a foreign counterpart, and cultus-forms passed from one land to another. No doubt this interaction did not always signify progress in religion, and sometimes it hastened decadence. But it meant a quickened religious interest and activity which, under favouring conditions, led to development. That such a contact and blending of religious systems did take place there is evidence to show. The archæological investigations of the last thirty years have disclosed a further vista of civilisation in East Mediterranean lands of which the former generation knew nothing. These discoveries point to an intercommunication of races which was formerly unsuspected, and suggest lines of influence between Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Palestine, Asia Minor, and Greece. And though we cannot, and perhaps never will, define these mutual influences very fully and clearly, we know enough to infer with some degree of certainty that the religious systems of these races were not isolated growths, but gained by contact and mutual influence. Isolation, racial and individual, is hostile to development; and a people which is shut out by natural barriers from intercourse with other races is hindered from making religious progress.

(2) The growth of the ethical consciousness powerfully affects religion, The ethical spirit, being less controlled

by the influence of tradition, frequently moves in advance of current religious belief and practice; and when this happens it reacts strongly on religion, and by its criticism stimulates religious progress. In the higher national religions the deepened and enlarged personal consciousness was accompanied by a growth in ethical feeling, which helped to transform the religious relation and to give it a moral in place of a naturalistic meaning. In the process of refining the religious relation the object of that relation was also purified. The deities of national polytheism retained traits of their natural origin, and reflected the ruder ideas of the early social groups which worshipped them. But under pressure of the moral consciousness a silent process of transformation ensued, and the effect was to throw the older features into the background and to accentuate the moral characteristics. In this way man has made the objects of his religious reverence reflect his own quickened sense of ethical values. It sometimes happens, however, that religion in its institutional forms does not readily prove tractable to the ethical influence; and the consequence may be a serious contradiction between the moral consciousness and religious ideas and habits. In this case instead of peaceful transformation there is a conflict issuing in the reform of religion. Crises of this kind engender strong feelings: they furnish the occasion for the activity of great personalities, and apart from them the reforming movement cannot be successfully carried out. For illustration we can point to the prophetic movement in Israel in the eighth century B.C. and to the Protestant Reformation. In cases like these the intense ethical spirit, becoming incarnate in heroic figures, breaks down opposition and leads religion onward in the path of progress. Here again religion follows rather than leads the movement of culture.

(3) The third factor which promotes religious development is the increase of scientific knowledge. I use the term *scientific* in a wide sense, and do not limit it to the knowledge yielded by the natural sciences. The growth

of knowledge makes its influence felt in promoting religious progress more conspicuously in the later than in the earlier stages of religion. A scientific insight into the working of nature and the course of history, or speculation on the ultimate meaning of life, is only possible after man has made the toilsome journey from barbarism to civilisation; and religion had already run a long course before the dawn of civilisation. So when men began to know and understand things through the exercise of reason, they were already confronted with conceptions of the world and human life which were the immemorial heritage of religion. These conceptions had been fashioned by naïve and imaginative thinking prompted and led by religious motives and interests, and when the light of scientific reflexion was turned upon them they disclosed defects and contradictions. Thought, which had purified itself from the grosser taints of sense, judged them anthropomorphic and incoherent. In these circumstances the reflective spirit may strive to bring religious ideas into harmony with its own movement, or it may content itself with criticising them from a detached standpoint. What it cannot do is to remain entirely aloof and indifferent. An outstanding instance of speculative thought working within a historic religion is seen in India, where a polytheistic system which had its roots in nature-worship was gradually transmuted into a subtle and far-reaching pantheism. In Greece, reflective thought took up a more negative attitude to the national polytheism, and did not seriously attempt to transform it. Yet in the philosophical religion of the Greek thinkers we also see a tendency to dissolve polytheism in a pantheistic unity. In such ways expanding knowledge, by throwing into strong relief the discrepancy between the ancient forms of religion and the new mental outlook, brings about change and advance. The demand for a coherent world-view in the end overcomes the reverence for ancient forms.

While growth of knowledge is not without effect on religious feeling and worship, its influence, as one would

expect, is much greater on religious doctrines, which represent the cognitive side of religion. For developed religion has to define itself in doctrines, and so broadens into a world-view that brings it into contact with scientific knowledge. Where a religion is alive and vigorous, interaction must follow, and in modern times we are witnessing a silent process by which old doctrines of the faith are revised and modified, in some instances discarded and in others transformed. This process is due to the changed intellectual environment in which the ancient religion is placed, and to whose pressure it responds. No doubt it is true that rationality is not a final test of a religion. For religion is more than reason, and yet it ought not to contradict reason: hence the obligation laid on man to bring his religious ideas into concord with his scientific knowledge. Accordingly any significant increase of knowledge will be a stimulus to the religious mind to adjust itself to the needs of the wider outlook. This is illustrated by the influence on religious ideas exercised in recent times by the new knowledge which has been the fruit of the recognition and application of the principle of evolution.

The religious consciousness, we have shown, involves the activity of the three psychical factors, thought, feeling, and will; and all are involved in man's religious development. Yet each does not contribute to progress in the same degree. Thought, with its restless movement and insatiable curiosity, contributes most to religious change and advance. Feeling on the whole is much more conservative, and in the form of sentiment closely guards the inheritance of the past and strives to resist the process of innovation. The phenomena of religious survival show how sentiment can preserve older religious rites and beliefs in a changed intellectual and social environment. Still we cannot say that thought is always on the side of progress and feeling always against it. For the feelings which have become intertwined with an old religion, rendered intense by what seems a wanton assault, can win over thought to their service and employ it to defend the

time-honoured citadel of the faith. And by this use of reason in its own defence religion gives testimony of its vitality. A decadent religion lacks inner resources to resist attack, and at the challenge of reason it can offer no apology for itself. On the other hand, feeling, if mainly conservative, is not always so. When a religion degenerates into corruptions and abuses, feeling is alienated, and may pass by revulsion into strong antagonism. This is notably so when religion is at open discord with the moral consciousness; then the feelings rally round the moral standard and give strength and persistence to the demand for reform. No great reforming movement in religion will prevail unless it has behind it the powerful support of the feelings.

Man seeks through religion a full and perfect satisfaction of his spiritual nature, and this implies the harmony of feeling, thought, and will. Each element does not advance *pari passu* with the others, but an advance in any one of them entails in the long run an advance in the others, if there is to be a true spiritual gain. The growth of the intellectual conception of God, for example, cannot remain a purely intellectual satisfaction, if it is to promote a real development of religion. It must influence the affective and the practical life, tending to spiritualise feeling and to foster the constant ethical will. The secret of religious development in an individual or a race lies in the capacity to overcome what is partial and one-sided, and to move beyond them to a satisfaction of the whole spiritual nature. It is easy to show that, when the religious spirit fails to assert the claims of the whole against the parts, the way to spiritual progress is barred. For example, when the intellectual interest becomes dominant and exclusive, religion declines to a sober and uninspiring rationalism which has little influence on the spiritual life. Thus the rational religion of Deism and the *Aufklärung* was too destitute of spiritual energy to minister to the religious well-being and progress of mankind. So likewise when exclusive stress is laid on

the practical side of religion, on the mere performance of stated acts, such as we see in certain phases of Legal Religion, the result is a mechanical performance from which clear faith and warm feeling have vanished. A like ineffectiveness and deterioration are visible when feeling gains an undisputed sway, as in some forms of Mysticism. Let us not, however, be understood to mean, that the secret of religious development lies in striking a balance, in wisely adjusting competing claims after the spirit of the old Greek maxim μηδὲν ἄγαν. If this were our meaning it might be in point to object: Can our religion ever be too practical? can we ever feel too deeply on sacred things? This, however, is little better than a travesty of our argument. It is not devotion to one aspect of religion, but indifference to the other aspects which spells defect. Besides, is it not just through the experience of defect that we are impelled to seek something better? In fact, progress is realised through partial developments which fail to satisfy because they are partial, and so through reaction lead to a reconciliation on a higher level. Man, involved in the time-process, and knowing only in part, cannot move forward on an even line to realise that ideal harmony in which each element in his nature comes to its due. He seeks, and in some measure finds; but hard experience and disappointment compel him to renew the quest. Not the clear prevision of all that the religious ideal means, but the consciousness that their spiritual nature has not been satisfied, has led mankind forward stage by stage on this spiritual pilgrimage. Each generation only sees far enough to take the next steps of the journey; and only when we look backward and trace the long and devious course, can we say that in religion something has been won, and man has not simply returned on his footsteps. We feel intuitively certain that ethical and spiritual religion is a purer and deeper fulfilment of man's nature than savage spiritism. Monotheism, we are equally sure, gives a security and peace of soul to which the polytheist,

with his divided allegiance, is a stranger. Hence we do not doubt that value has been gained and development has been real. Behind this development and revealed in it is the nature of man, and it has determined the direction in which the ideal lies. The actual attainment is the measure of man's free devotion to the ideal.

C.—Main Features and Results.

Let us now try to draw some general conclusions. In doing this care is needed, for in a subject like the present it is easy to make generalisations which are only partially true. At the outset we are confronted with the fact that only a part of man's religious evolution is open to our view. For at least tens of thousands of years, man, as distinguished from the animal, has inhabited the earth; but there remains no positive evidence of the religion of those long vanished races whose existence we infer from the rude flint implements, such as have been found in the river gravels of France and Belgium.[1] And if the beginnings of religion are veiled in obscurity, its future is likewise hidden from our view. For we can hardly suppose that religion has now reached the final stage of its evolution, and that, while culture continues to develop, religion will remain stationary. Indeed there cannot be a doubt that religion will undergo changes in the years to come; but what exactly these will be, and how the great religious systems will affect one another, we do not clearly know. Even though we hold that the supreme principle of religion has been realised, yet so long as that principle has not worked itself fully

[1] There is still a very serious division of opinion among geologists and anthropologists in regard to the period during which *homo sapiens* has inhabited the earth. Some boldly affirm that it extends through many hundreds of thousands of years, while others, more cautious, only suggest tens of thousands. We are sceptical when invited to believe the owner of the jawbone, found recently in the Mauer sands near Heidelberg, lived half a million years ago. It is to be hoped the investigations of the future will shed light on this problem.

out, we cannot say that the process in its whole significance is before us. For beings whose lot falls within a process which they can only survey in part, a perfect insight into the meaning of the whole appears to be an unattainable ideal.

Meanwhile it is possible to set forth the main features of the evolution of religion as it presents itself to us, along with the conclusions which it suggests. On a large view religion passes through three great stages. The first and earliest known to us is Spiritism, the primitive form of belief out of which all higher religion has grown. Then follows Polytheism, the religion of the nation in contrast to the tribe: a stage of religion which was reached on the formation of the larger national States some time before the clear light of history. Finally comes Monotheism, a spiritual faith which goes beyond the limits of the nation, and, in its Christian form, out of the dissolution of the national States of the old world has become a Universal Religion. The movement in its broad features is from the natural to the spiritual, from outward to inward; this is reflected in the gradual transformation of the idea of the divine Object and the character of worship. In Spiritism the gods, though behind the objects of sense, fall within the natural system of things; in Polytheism they are exalted above the immediate environment, and overrule the course of nature; in Monotheism, God transcends the material universe, while sustaining it and working through it. Again, in tribal religion the relation of man to his gods is merely natural: national religion purifies the religious bond of its materialism, and begins to infuse into it an ethical meaning: in universal religion this process is completed, and results in a truly moral and spiritual relationship. Lastly, in worship, Spiritism is quite external and sensuous. It is the acts which count, the state of the worshipper's mind is indifferent. And the goods which are sought in worship are material, for man looks no higher than his material wants. National religion, in its nobler forms

at least, helped to lift worship above this crude materialism of motive, and to invest it with something of an ethical and patriotic significance. Monotheism transforms worship into a spiritual communion of man and God, which is expressed in the outer world by the life of ethical service. These three stages of religion mark an ascending scale of life, and therefore of human needs and of the objects which satisfy these needs. A gradual purification and refinement of religious values are visible. The development is from the sensuous to the spiritual, from the desire of outward things to the consciousness that the highest goods are the goods of the soul. Hence, underlying the evolution of religion and working through it, is the growth of self-consciousness, the personal development of man. Men are known by the gods they reverence. For man's spiritual conception of God and the religious relation is inseparably bound up with his spiritual conception of himself. The values of the things in heaven reflect the ideals which prevail on earth, and there is a sense in which it is profoundly true:—

"Dass jeglicher das Beste was er kennt,
Er Gott ja seinen Gott benennt."

Religious development is at root an aspect of self-development, and it is a process in which external stimuli are gradually replaced by spiritual motives. Hence savage religion is spasmodic and intermittent, while spiritual religion is constant and pervasive of the life. In early culture social changes and the transition to fresh conditions of existence do most to bring about a growth of religious ideas. Beliefs seem rather impressed on the mind from the side of the environment than freely developed from within. But when man, by the resources of civilisation, has emancipated himself from the tyranny of material nature, and gained a deeper consciousness of himself and his powers, the growing needs of his inner life prevail and urge him on the path of religious progress. He now develops his religion, not through stress of circum-

stances, but because he is convinced that development leads to a fuller and deeper satisfaction of the spirit.

Though the general tendencies revealed in the history of religion are as we have described them, the actual movement is not simple, and the study of details suggests qualifications. We never find a steady and consistent growth in the direction indicated. Periods of great activity and rapid expansion in the history of religion are followed by times of reaction, when what was gained seems lost. Religions once powerful appear to lose their energy, and when the culture-systems out of which they grew disintegrate, they pass away with them. At the best their contribution to the larger development of religion is indirect, nor is it easy to appreciate it. Again, a religion after it has passed its classical period, so to speak, sometimes fails in vitality: it becomes stereotyped and mechanised, and does not progress. This, for instance, is true of the later Jewish religion. Again the story of Buddhism in the Christian era is a record how an ethical and universal religion has become entangled with and overgrown by alien elements, which have stifled its development. No religion appears to be exempt from periods of reaction and decline. But a religion which is endowed with vigorous life silently gathers its resources during the season of decay, and by and by it brings its winter to a close and renews its powers in a spiritual springtime. The great and conspicuous illustration of this is Christianity, which triumphed over the decadence of the Middle Ages and is still a quick and growing faith.

A further qualification must be made when we speak of religious development. In a complete development the lower elements are taken up and transformed in the life of the higher stage, or, if they resist the transforming movement, they are discarded. In the evolution of religion this process is carried out very imperfectly: we constantly observe the lower persisting alongside the higher, where they are not really consistent with one another. The principle of survival in religion has already

been discussed, and it is not necessary to enlarge upon it again. It may suffice to say that in any religion, whether of the past or present, the existence of these heterogeneous elements can easily be verified. In a rough way they correspond to grades of culture and spirituality within the social system. If one were to take the whole mass of beliefs and practices which are at present associated with any of the great religions of the world, it would be quite impossible to form them into a coherent whole. So long as this is so, development is imperfect. Probably the increase of culture and the wider diffusion of knowledge will make it more and more difficult for the cruder beliefs and superstitions to linger on in civilised lands; and if so, the elimination of these lower elements will remove a hindrance to coherency in the historic religions. But the process is not easy of accomplishment, and its consummation is still distant. Meanwhile the facts constrain us to admit that, in the history of religion, the principle of development in its full meaning is only partially realised.

The ordinary ideas about man's religious development have taken shape rather under the influence of faith in the future than from a study of the past. Those who, for one reason or another, believe that mankind is moving forward to one universal and spiritual religion, will naturally see the past in an optimistic light, and find in it the tokens of preparation and progress. It is certainly an uplifting hope, that the endless differences of creed, ritual, and service will finally be merged in a perfect and final religion. Expecting the land of promise, the wayfarer forgets the painful wanderings in the wilderness. The religious philosopher, however, will not espouse this faith without examination; he will call for historical evidences and consider psychological possibilities. The theologian may appeal to authority, but the philosopher is compelled to ask for reasons.

If we look to the past, then, we find, as we have said, a movement of advance from Spiritism to Monotheism

which has been at least partially realised. Interruptions there have been and fallings away, but progress has prevailed, and beyond a doubt the highest religion of to-day is incomparably better than the crude beliefs of savage man. If we judge by developmental capacity and adaptability to the various needs of mankind, the type of spiritual monotheism represented by Christianity seems best fitted for the universal religion. Yet the idea that the human race is moving to the acceptance of a single religious creed is beset with difficulties, and these deserve consideration. In the first place, it is plain that a highly developed and spiritual religion can only appeal in a limited degree to savage tribes in the lower culture. You cannot bodily transplant religious ideas, which have gradually evolved within an organised system of culture, into the minds of savage tribes who are ignorant of even the elements of civilisation. Still, in so far as these lower races show tokens of being able to absorb the elements of civilised life, it is possible that they may learn to assimilate a spiritual and universal religion. But the fact cannot be blinked, that some of these primitive peoples seem to wither away before the breath of civilisation. The story of those lower races whom the 'progress of civilisation' has destroyed, or is fast destroying, is a painful commentary on modern humanitarianism. Moreover, though we leave savage races out of account, it may be argued that the civilised peoples of the East and West stand spiritually apart, and the one shows no hospitality for the religious ideas of the other. The progress, for instance, of Christianity in India and China has been relatively small, and we cannot predict from what has been achieved in the past its triumph in any measurable period of time. On the other hand, we must not base sweeping conclusions on the missionary efforts of a few generations carried on at scattered points. And within recent years there has been a remarkable awakening of Eastern nations to Western ideas which is of fateful significance: this may be the herald of a new receptiveness to the great spiritual religion of the European peoples.

There is, indeed, no sure proof that this will be so, but there are at least hopeful tokens.

There is another difficulty which cannot be lightly passed over. While a process of integration has been taking place by which lesser religious systems have been merged in great and widespread faiths, there has also been a process of differentiation. Modern Christianity, with its multiplicity of churches and creeds, is an illustration. And no one who frankly regards the facts will deny, that among peoples accounted Christian there exist very great diversities of religious belief and life. Even the Roman Catholic Church is a unity of organisation rather than of belief. This wide range of differences is not concealed by a common name: it contrasts with the greater unity of primitive faith, and does not seem to grow less with the lapse of time. This, it is urged, is fatal to the hope of a universal religion.[1] I think we must admit that, human nature being what it is, we can hardly look for a time when all men will be perfectly one in religious belief and practice. Differences in character and culture are reflected in religion, and no race takes over a religion without modifying it in the process. Moreover, there is something inward and personal in the higher form of religious faith which is hostile to uniformity. On the other hand, there is undoubtedly a unity in human nature, and this underlies all the various manifestations of the religious consciousness. The same needs, hopes, and fears continually recur, and find like forms of expression. Does not this unity of desire point to a unity of fulfilment? a unity of the spirit if not of the letter? As modern civilisation brings the diverse culture-systems of the world into closer contact and interaction, it is not fanciful to expect that they will converge and meet within the one great spiritual and Universal Religion. Stereotyped

[1] *Vid.* Wundt, *Völkerpsychologie*, vol. ii. pt. 3, pp. 755–765. After reviewing the facts and emphasising the divergences of belief covered by the name Christian, Wundt gives a negative answer to the question under discussion.

identity is indeed impossible, and differences will remain to express the differences of human minds; but there may be a spiritual unity of faith and life which transcends the differences.

All who study the history of religion will not acquiesce in this view. We admit it is not a view which is forced upon us by an examination of the facts, though it is not inconsistent with them. But it is only on some such postulate that we can fully justify the teleological conception of man's religious development.[1] A true development is a process in which value is conserved and increased, and the end is better than the beginning. It means that the religious consciousness rises to richer and deeper forms of spiritual self-fulfilment, while the gains of the past are maintained in the present; lower and more material forms of religion die out, or are purified and transformed; and this age-long movement, as it works itself out in the scattered races of the world, is converging towards a common goal. But to give convincing evidence of this from the phenomenology of religion is not possible. If, for instance, it were argued that the tendency to integration, which we see in the history of religion, will in the long run be overcome by a process of differentiation, and in consequence of this latter process religion will become more and more a matter of subjective conviction, endlessly diversified in character and precluding unity of faith and community of service, our only sufficient ground for rejecting such an inference would be certain postulates. In this way postulates become the arbiters of ultimate issues. A recent writer, after discussing at some length the problems connected with the development of religion, comes to the conclusion that, by an inner dialectic, the religious spirit

[1] H. Siebeck has pointed out, that the actuality and continuity of progress are less matters of knowledge than of faith. *Vid. Zur Religionsphilosophie*, 1907, p. 9. And if one were to suppose the destiny of religion was to break up into a countless diversity of beliefs without any real unity, he would be slow to discern signs of progress in the past.

moves forward to its goal, the religion of divine humanity. However we may sympathise with this religious ideal, we do not think the author shows in any convincing way that the historic evidence bears out this conclusion. The conclusion is really the outcome of certain metaphysical presuppositions which he brings to bear on his historical discussion.[1] That the historic study of development should lead up to a speculative theory of its nature, we are not in the least disposed to deny. But it is important to take care that we do not put forward metaphysical principles in the guise of historical facts. To our mind it is better to study the phenomenology of the religious consciousness apart from a metaphysical theory of its nature, and then simply point out that to justify and complete the notion of religious development certain postulates are called for. The justification of such postulates will be, that by means of them we give completeness to our conception of religious development, and impart to it a satisfying meaning.

First of all there is the postulate that the supreme Value is spiritual, and that the spiritual always takes precedence of the sensuous in the order of worth. From this it follows that the completion and full realisation of his spiritual nature will be the religious ideal of man. If any one is concerned to dispute this, we could not refute him by a rational proof. The judgment of value which asserts the precedence of the spiritual to the natural has to be taken as immediate and self-evident: it cannot be deduced from something else. The existence of a supreme Value is a demand of personal spirits, who find it necessary to the right organisation and direction of their lives. Without this postulate of an Ultimate Value, which is the goal of spiritual evolution, there would be no means of assuring ourselves that the process was really a development which revealed a growth of spiritual good. For the ideal we postulate becomes the standard by which we compare and appreciate the values of the historic process.

[1] A. Dorner, *Grundriss der Religionsphilosophie*, 1903, p. 414 ff.

But if the existence of an Ultimate Value is a postulate, it is also a postulate that the continuity of spiritual development will be maintained and that the goal will be reached. For the facts do not necessarily yield this conclusion. It is a mistake to suppose, as some have done, that there are immanent principles at work in the spiritual development of the race which will inevitably bring about the realisation of the ideal. The study of the past does not reveal these, and even though it did, the past could not be the guarantee of the future. That the ideal of spiritual development will be realised is a postulate of faith, and it expresses the demands and aspirations working in our spiritual experience. The important part played by faith is manifest by the way its presence or absence affects man's interpretation of religious evolution. When there is no faith in the reality and directive power of the Ideal, men refuse to see evidence of religious progress. To the materialist and the agnostic the history of religion discloses no tokens of an increasing good. On the contrary, it appears to be a long and sorry story of vain desires and fond imaginings: it began in gross superstition and it will end in total disillusionment. Of course no one can come to this conclusion and at the same time 'think nobly of the soul.' But to lose faith in the reality of the ideal means, in the long run, to lose faith in human nature itself. Our faith that man in his spiritual development is moving forward, despite many wanderings and mistakes, to the realisation of an ultimate Good, is likewise a faith in the sanity and sincerity of the human spirit. Without these postulates of faith spiritual evolution would not be for us a significant process.

PART II.

RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE AND ITS VALIDITY (EPISTEMOLOGICAL).

CHAPTER VI.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF RELIGION AND THE PROBLEM OF VALIDITY.

The Psychology of Religion is important, because it is essential to know the facts of religious experience and the way in which they work, before we attempt to form a theory of their meaning. In the case of the physical sciences it is possible, in view of the purpose on hand, to neglect the part which the mind plays in giving form to the facts. They can simply be accepted as given, and then interpreted by the principle of causal connexion. In the case of religion it is not possible to proceed in this fashion, for the facts with which we deal are primarily psychical, and can only be understood as processes taking place in living minds. Rites and outward acts of worship are not religious facts at all, unless they are the expression of man's beliefs and feelings, and reveal his desires and purposes. Hence the growing recognition which is accorded to psychology by those who wish to study religion in the making, and to understand what it really is. The psychologist regards religion from the inner side, and this is the condition of an intelligent insight. To attempt to construct a philosophy of religion apart from psychology, is to lay oneself open to the charge of trying to explain without actually knowing the thing you are explaining.

The method of the religious psychologist is empirical and inductive, and he must set out from the correct observation of the facts which present themselves to the religious mind. This preliminary task is, however, neither simple nor light; and though a good deal has been done recently in the way of collecting and sifting material, there is much which yet remains to be done. For the field is very wide, and the phenomena sometimes complicated and obscure. But, having got his materials, the business of the psychologist is to analyse them, and to show how they illustrate and express the general principles and uniformities of psychical phenomena. Religion is a product of mind, and the psychologist will seek to show that the product reveals the working of mind. While trying to do his duty faithfully in this respect, the psychologist is not pronouncing on the truth or validity of the phenomena he is examining. He deals with the facts as illustrations of the laws of mental process, and for him the abnormal and pathological in religion are as well worth study as the ordinary and habitual. Hence the explanations which the psychologist offers are provisional: by interpreting the phenomena of the religious consciousness in the light of psychological principles he gives us working hypotheses, and he supplies the religious philosopher with data for the construction of a more profound and comprehensive theory.

The spirit in which the psychologist executes his work should be scientific. He ought to discharge his task with an unbiassed mind, though in practice, while investigating a subject like religion, it is well nigh impossible for any one to occupy a perfectly detached standpoint. Nor indeed is an attitude, so dispassionate as to be indifferent, desirable. In fact, the student of religion requires some personal knowledge of and sympathy with religion, if he is to be successful in the work of interpretation. What he must guard against is *parti pris*, the bias in favour of a particular theory of religion which inclines a man to look only for facts which will verify his preconceived opinions.

Religion, like philosophy, has its 'idols of the tribe' and of the 'market place,' and these exercise an unwholesome tyranny over the spirit. We have no right to demand that the student of the Psychology of Religion should not prefer one religion to another; but we are entitled to ask that he should work out his subject with an open mind and display an impartial judgment. In practice, we have hinted, this is not always easy, and yet it is a condition of fruitful labour. The psychologist falls into the error of which we have been speaking, if he assumes there is no explanation of religion save the psychological, and that it is sufficient. For this means that he assumes we know the claim of religion to an objective reference is not justified, or at least that we can never know that it is. Consequently he interprets the divine object to be merely the projection of human desires, and, in an illegitimate way, pronounces a judgment of validity when he should only have pronounced a judgment of fact. The Positivist who insists on interpreting all religious phenomena as 'survivals' of a past which the race is rapidly outgrowing, sins in exactly the same way. On the other side, equally unjustified is the procedure of the narrow religionist who begins by dividing all religions into true and false. It may be right to say, with the late Professor James, that it contradicts the very spirit of life to be indifferent or neutral on the question of the world's salvation.[1] Yet our interest in the salvation of the world should not preclude us from dealing faithfully with religious phenomena whose spirit and tendency are not in harmony with our own. The Christian psychologist who sympathises with the desire for immortality ought not on that account to minimise such a phenomenon as the Buddhist aspiration after Nirvâna. If the chemist or biologist must take care not to seek only for facts which will verify his hypothesis, the duty is even more urgent on the student of religious experience.

But however valuable the psychological study of

[1] *Pragmatism*, 1912, p. 285.

religion may be, the facts themselves hardly allow us to rest at the psychological point of view. The tendency will always be for those who examine religious experience to draw conclusions, expressed or unexpressed, on religious truth. Religious experiences, in point of fact, do not come to us in a perfectly pure form, so that they can be reckoned as immediate data. Here, as elsewhere, the psychologist finds that presentations and representations, facts and meanings, cannot be separated by a hard and narrow line. A psychology of pure presentations or facts is not practicable; for psychical facts are more than bare events; being facts for a self-conscious mind they possess meaning and involve inferences. It is because religious experiences are more than mere events that they acquire spiritual significance and value, and play a part in the religious life. In other words, the so-called psychological facts of religious experience under analysis lose their *prima facie* simplicity: they are really fashioned and coloured by the connected whole of spiritual experience in which they are elements. What people call the *facts* of their inner religious history always involve in some degree a process of interpretation through a system of religious beliefs and ideas. For facts thus interpreted truth is claimed, and with this claim the possibility of error is not excluded. Psychologists point out that facts of sense-perception, which seem to be given to us in the form in which they appear, are really due to a process of unconscious interpretation which makes them what they are. Percepts without concepts, as Kant remarked, are blind. And those who study religious experience and its phenomena are irresistibly led to the conclusion that the same process is constantly present there. The experiences associated with mysticism show this very clearly. To the mystic himself, no doubt, the revelation seems to come from without, and to be independent of his own thought and will. But if we examine the experience we shall find that the mystic has helped to shape it: he has read into it the beliefs of his own religious system. The mystical

experience, it has been said, is not so much a pure experience as an experience penetrated with doctrine.[1] To illustrate this, let me refer to a well-known vision of St. Teresa. She relates: "One day, being in orison, it was granted me to perceive in one instant how all things are seen and contained in God." Another day, while repeating the Athanasian Creed, she reports: "Our Lord made me to comprehend in what way it is that one God can be in three persons."[2] We do not attribute insincerity to the saint when we say that her vision was an interpretation in terms of the doctrinal system of her Church. No such 'experience' could have come to a Hindu mystic, for example. Again, we know that Luther firmly believed in a personal devil, and thought his belief was grounded on excellent evidence. The intelligent modern Christian, breathing a 'scientific' atmosphere, has no longer an 'experience' of the kind; and many things which the men of an older time held to be plain facts, the scientific student of to-day declares to be pathological phenomena. Instances might be multiplied, but the point I wish to emphasise is, that the so-called data of religious experience are not pure data. They imply a system of beliefs, and involve, in a greater or less degree, a process of interpretation. Nor would they have religious significance apart from these implications. We shall hardly understand the diversified character of religious experiences in different races and civilisations, if we do not keep this in mind.

Our conclusion is, that we cannot steadily appeal to the facts of religious experience as though they were self-evident. For the fact that you have an experience does not guarantee the truth of the meaning you read into the experience; and the certainty of mere fact is not identical with the truth-value of its content. Of course there are cases in which the religious man's perceptions are so

[1] Delacroix, *Études d'Histoire et de Psychologie du Mysticisme*, 1908, p. 348.

[2] James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 411.

direct and immediate that it is meaningless to doubt or deny them. When, for instance, he tells us he is conscious of a discord and division in his life which make him feel unhappy, and impel him to seek deliverance, we are surely not entitled to doubt that this is so, granted the good faith of the individual. On the other hand, if the same person tells us he feels he has broken the law of God, that this breach entails certain penalties, but it will be pardoned on certain conditions,—then, though he may be asserting what is true, he is not asserting what is self-evident. He is putting a doctrinal construction on his experience which can at least have its validity impugned, and in any case requires to be sifted and tested. Such a claim cannot be admitted simply on demand, however sincerely the demand may be made.

In an earlier chapter the point was urged, that religious belief claims to be true and to have a real object. Every definite belief, whether religious or no, presupposes a judgment, and judgment always refers to a reality beyond the act of judging. The claim made for a judgment may only be that it is true in a particular 'universe of discourse.' For example, 'Titania was the queen of the fairies,' and 'Zeus was the son of Cronos,' are valid statements when we are speaking of fairyland in Shakespeare's plays, and of Greek mythology. If belief in any form attaches to a judgment, it ceases *eo ipso* to be regarded as arbitrary, and claims to be valid under some set of conditions.[1] Now it is a feature of the normal religious consciousness that its judgments have the strong

[1] The doctrine that every judgment refers to and qualifies Reality as an individual whole has the support of eminent thinkers like Messrs. Bradley and Bosanquet. But this theory identifies thought with reality to an extent which it does not seem possible to justify, and fails to provide adequately for the fact of error. If we sometimes think wrongly, then every judgment cannot enter into the structure of the real universe. It is, however, true to say that what we *imagine* is still an object, for it is what we mean or intend by the act of imagining. And though not real it has a tendency towards reality; for we try if the thing we imagine can find a place in the real world. See on this point the remarks of Lipps, *Vom Fühlen, Wollen, und Denken*, 1902, p. 55.

emotional colouring which characterises vivid belief. The certainty which marks religious faith rests largely, though not entirely, on the suggestive power of feeling. The religious man feels that his ideas must be true, and claims objective validity for the content of his acts of faith. He affirms that the object of his faith is real in a trans-subjective sense: it is recognised by him, not made by him. "To believe that God is, is in some fashion to believe that he is, independently of our belief in him."[1] Man cannot reverence what he knows to be a fiction; and the history of religion is the record of deities who passed for real to those who worshipped them. Whatever value and validity we may assign to faith in the religious life, we must at least recognise that the man of faith does not deal in possibilities, nor does he suppose that "probability is the guide of life." He does not make postulates merely on the ground that they may prove helpful. He affirms the divine object to be real in itself, and the act of affirming it to be true and valid.

Does religion, since it claims validity for its beliefs, seek to make good the claim which it puts forward? No doubt for many religious people the emotional certainty with which beliefs are held is a sufficient attestation of their truth. The cognitive side of faith is dominated and controlled by the emotional. Nevertheless in the case of developed religion this marked subordination of the cognitive to the affective or feeling-interest is not always possible. For thought has now wakened to its mission, and has been busy explaining things by showing they are elements in a rational order. Alongside religion a thinking view of the world has developed, and an effort is made to show that the validity claimed for religious ideas is consistent with this rational order. Men are naturally disposed to believe that what feeling claims to be true reason can also justify. It has been said, indeed, that the cognitive and feeling-factors in the faith-state are never in perfect harmony, and they cannot blend in a

[1] Boutroux, *Science et Religion*, p. 334.

true unity. The one element tends to overcome or displace the other. Professor H. Maier contends that the emotional interest only works pure and unimpaired in the sphere of religious belief, so long as it controls the cognitive need.[1] And he urges that warmth of religious feeling tends to fade, whenever the spirit of philosophical speculation begins to dominate the ideas of faith. In the result, on this view, we have a dualism between the cognitive and emotional elements in faith, a dualism which, it is said, will persist, because it springs from the finitude of human nature. Without denying the great importance of feeling in faith, we venture to think the antithesis between the emotional and intellective elements is too sharply drawn. Feelings suggest ideas and ideas in turn evoke feelings, and the two are necessary to each other. Feeling prompts the mind to claim truth for its religion, and ideas in themselves cannot be antagonistic to the mental process which seeks to justify the claim. And even when thought declines to endorse the demands of feeling, feeling will sometimes acquiesce in the refusal and try to adjust itself to the new situation. Faith and knowledge alike fall within the activity of the personal life, and the difference between them does not amount to a settled discord. The existence of a difference of the kind calls for an endeavour to overcome it, for man ever desires that the object of faith should both satisfy the feelings and be valid for thought.

We must admit that the subjective feeling of certainty with which a man holds his religious beliefs is no sufficient guarantee of their truth. To put the matter in the most general way: the psychological feeling of certainty does not in itself give the assurance of epistemological validity. In ordinary experience we are all familiar with the fact, how it is possible to feel very sure and in the end to find that we have been mistaken. And we cannot proceed far in the study of religious beliefs without realising how

[1] *Psychologie des Emotionalen Denkens*, 1908, p. 541 ff. Maier's discussion is able and suggestive.

utterly hopeless it would be to establish the validity of them all. For many of these beliefs will not cohere with one another, and are, besides, inconsistent with knowledge which we possess. At one stage men are sure that many deities exist, and at a later stage they are convinced there is only one; now God is conceived to possess the attributes of a man, only in an extraordinary degree, and now he is conceived to be an infinite and eternal Spirit, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent; at one time salvation is found in the punctual and scrupulous performance of ritual obligations, and at another it is found in the inner condition of the soul. Hence every one recognises it is impossible to establish every claim to religious validity, unless indeed you are to fall back on the ancient and thoroughly sceptical maxim: "What seems to each man to be true is true to him." Needless to say this principle would be destructive of religion, for religion is a social bond and rule of life, not a shifting and ill-defined mass of private beliefs. If, then, the conflict of religious ideas and systems calls for selection and differentiation between them, if at the least we must distinguish degrees of validity; on what principle are we to proceed and what test are we to apply? This question would not be a difficult and perplexing one, were it possible to contend that man is in possession of an absolute knowledge of God, the world, and himself, in the light of which he can determine the degree of truth in every form of belief. But we cannot vindicate such a claim to knowledge, and few or none at present would care to make it. On the other hand, to fall back on 'unreasoned immediate assurance' is not practicable, unless it were the case, which it is not, that these assurances led steadily to the same conclusion. In these circumstances it is hardly surprising that there should be a strong inclination to set aside the intellectual criterion of religious validity, and to substitute for it a practical test. Why, it is urged, should we hold to a criterion which the knowledge at our disposal does not enable us to use effectively? The essence of truth, we are told, is value;

and religious beliefs which approve themselves to be good working values thereby verify themselves, and may be taken for true. If we study, then, the working of religious beliefs in individual and social experience, we shall find that those which show themselves practically valuable are to all intents and purposes true. This is the solution of the problem put forward by Pragmatists, and we are assured it is 'sufficient for practical purposes.' The sane and effectual way to decide between rival beliefs is to judge them by their consequences. The test, it will be noted, does not rest on any *a priori* conception of what religion ought to be: it is a purely empirical test, a judgment by results. I am ready to admit that the pragmatic way of looking at the question is important and helpful, and there is a pragmatic flavour in the saying of the New Testament: "If any man willeth to do God's will, he shall know of the doctrine."[1] I will, however, postpone to a later chapter the fuller discussion of the problem of truth in its relation to rationality and to value. At present I will confine myself to a short explanation why, as it seems to me, the pragmatic criterion is not a sufficient determination of religious validity.

The test of working-value appears to be simple, but it is not so simple as it appears. One can draw broad conclusions on the practical value of a religion in history, when the historical evidence is sufficient for that purpose. But every religion is a complex of beliefs, and a knowledge of the value of a religion as a whole does not decide the specific worth of any one of these beliefs. We cannot, to take an illustration, fairly argue from the success of Christianity that its doctrine of eternal punishment is true. The whole problem, moreover, becomes more difficult, because it is often the case that a particular doctrine is much more helpful to one individual than to another, and a belief which proves valuable in one age may lose its importance in another. Nor would it be easy to give an extended and full survey of the practical

[1] John vii. 17.

value of any belief, so as to ensure the certainty of the inference drawn. Hence the individual would tend to decide the historic question of value by an act of faith, based on his own appreciation of the doctrine in question. In these circumstances one would look for very different estimates from different individuals. Two quotations from Prof. James are of interest here, for they appear to confirm our opinion of the lack of cogency and universality in the purely pragmatic inference. The pragmatist, he tells us, "is willing to live on a scheme of uncertified possibilities which he trusts." Again: "Pragmatism has to postpone dogmatic answer, for we do not yet know certainly which type of religion is going to work best in the long run."[1] The admission is significant, for it means that the test of working-value cannot be made complete enough to be quite convincing. Though judgment by results seems a safe rule, yet everything depends on the scope and character of the results. And it would surely be a hazardous step to proclaim that the success of a religion at a particular period was a token of its validity, or that a religion which sinks into corruption for a time was therefore not true. On these lines we might establish the truth of Buddhism or Mohammedanism when they were vigorous and expanding faiths, and decide that Christianity was not true during the degradation of the Church in the Middle Ages. Of course it will be said you must make a more exhaustive test; but the point is that even then we do not have completeness. And what of the working of religious systems and ideas in the future? Here assuredly we must fall back on faith. The purely empirical method thus comes short of offering a conclusive test, and requires to be supplemented by faith. This means that individual experience would play the chief part in determining what is valuable and so valid in religion. But individual experience, even within a particular race, is very various, and could not yield that coherency of belief which is essential to truth. No wise man will belittle the notion

[1] *Pragmatism*, pp. 297–298, 300–301.

of practical value, for it plays no small part in giving stability and assurance to religious convictions. None the less it does not seem capable of being made the sole and sufficient criterion of religious truth.

The movement to resolve truth into practical worth frequently seeks support in biological principles and analogies. Thought, it is held, is merely a functional development of the life-process, which is designed to subserve the needs of the individual and the race. It is always subordinate and a means. The practical demands of life are supreme: thought emerges as a means to an end, and truth is value for an end. The truth of religious ideas is their functional value for human purposes. On this showing it becomes superfluous to inquire if there is any reality corresponding to the idea of God, for the significance of the idea is just its usefulness. "The truth of the matter may be put in this way: *God is not known, He is not understood; He is used*—used a good deal, and with an admirable disregard of logical consistency, sometimes as meat purveyor, sometimes as moral support, sometimes as friend, sometimes as an object of love."[1] The conclusion to be drawn is, that "the chief difficulties concerning the truth of ideas arise from attempts to estimate their validity out of relation to the only situations in which they can be true or false, that is, the situations involving conduct. The idea of God has been treated in this way."[2] The result of this line of thought is to empty the idea of God of objective or independent reality. Of God in the latter sense we neither know nor can know anything. One cannot see that this conception of Deity differs from a convenient fiction, which proves practically serviceable. A modern investigator imbued with the spirit of Hobbes might welcome this conclusion, but the normal religious man simply cannot accept it. For him the God who ceases to be independently real ceases at the same time to

[1] Prof. Leuba, as quoted by Ames, *Psychology of Religious Experience*, p. 314.

[2] Ames, *op. cit.* p. 317.

be useful: value cannot maintain itself apart from validity. How far we can justify the normal religious consciousness in its claim to truth is a question which has to be solved, but the attempt to solve it should proceed by a different method. We reach no satisfying solution by the simple reduction of truths to values.

If we cannot reach an answer to our difficulties by identifying truths with practically useful beliefs, we must endeavour to put the problem in another way: we may ask, not what we find it useful to believe, but what we ought to believe in order that our belief may be a valid and trustworthy experience. Are there not normative principles of the religious consciousness—principles presupposed in empirical experience yet not created by it—which give validity to religious ideas and beliefs? If so, then when we recognise and conform to these principles are we moving on the line of religious truth? To put the problem in this way suggests an endeavour to deal with it on Kantian lines and by the help of *a priori* elements. But a little reflexion will make it clear that this method is not strictly applicable in the case of religion. To say that spiritual experience points us to a rational and *a priori* element which determines the objective truth of religion may sound well, but it does not carry us further on the way to establish the validity of any particular belief.[1] One can hardly suppose there would be general agreement about the existence of such an *a priori*, and even if such a factor did exist, it would be too abstract to be of use in determining the truth of different types of religious doctrine and life. Still there is an element of right in this method which pure empiricism ignores; for there is some recognition of the truth that the spiritual nature of man is the universal presupposition of religious experience. Man is religious because it is his nature to be religious; and his nature is not created by his experience, but helps to shape it. Human experience implies a reaction of the self on

[1] Troeltsch, *Psychologie und Erkentnistheorie*, tries to reach the idea of religious validity through a modified Kantian epistemology.

what is given, and it is the character of the self which counts most. Beyond doubt the postulate which makes intelligible the far-reaching similarities of religion, is the fundamental identity of human nature. Religious experience everywhere bears the impress of that nature.

Man makes his religion, and he must judge of its value and validity by the faculties with which he has been endowed. He must judge with the means at his disposal, and he may fall into error or mistake half truths for truths. The weakness of mortal powers seems to make the quest of spiritual truth a hazardous one, and we shall be told there is a more excellent way. The claim may be made for authentic historic facts, that they decide the question of religious truth. These facts, it is argued, are of such a kind that they assure us of the validity of the truths to which they bear witness, and establish them on a basis of their own. So the truth of certain religious doctrines is guaranteed historically, and they bear evidence of a divine origin. I shall not attempt to discuss here what can be regarded as divinely revealed, and what can be regarded as elaborated by man. But it must be pointed out that the problem of religious truth cannot be summarily solved in this way. It will not be maintained that the claim to be authoritative truth carries the evidence of its validity on its face. Certainly it is not the case that the claim has only to be stated to be accepted: the plain fact is that it is admitted by some and rejected by others. But those who admit the claim can only do so in virtue of the manner in which the evidence appeals to them, and produces in them the conviction of truth. In the last resort conviction of truth, though it be historically mediated, comes from the working of the human mind, which is satisfied that the demands of truth are fulfilled. Apart from living minds, historical data could not become spiritual values and assume a religious significance. The inner witness of the spirit is essential, and without it historical proofs count for very little, as many theologians have recognised. We cannot therefore get away from the fact

that the recognition and assertion of religious validity proceed from the self-conscious mind of man, and signify that the mind experiences the feeling of satisfaction and harmony which is the note of truth. The essence of a truth called 'authoritative' is the nature of the assent which it evokes from the human spirit.

We shall be told, perhaps, that we have returned to a subjective standpoint, and have laid ourselves open to the objections urged against empirical value when taken for the sole test of spiritual truth. And the objection would be justified if the conviction of truth varied with the experience and inclinations of individuals. But what is subjective is not perforce individual and arbitrary. 'Man is the measure' is not the symbol of scepticism, so long as there is a universal nature in man which is normative. And plainly we cannot derive validity from a narrow and partial conception of the nature of man. The spiritual satisfaction which is a token of truth must involve all the psychical factors in a working harmony: it requires the response and assent of the whole man. Hence the truth of a religion will be decided by the way in which its conception of the world satisfies the reason, its practical ideal the will, and its presentation of the religious relation the feelings and emotions. The more fully the different elements support and supplement one another, the greater is the assurance of religious truth. Let us see how this principle works in a concrete case. We are asked, let us say, to pronounce on the relative validity of polytheism and of monotheism. In this instance there will be no difficulty in deciding that monotheism satisfies far better the demands of thought for coherency and purpose in the world; while it gives a unity and consistency to the practical life, and a rallying centre to the feelings, which polytheism is powerless to give. Here there should be no hesitation in pronouncing where the greater truth lies. Moreover, while empirical value cannot by itself yield a sufficient test of religious validity, yet it is of much importance as a support and confirmation.

This is especially the case when we take a large view, and consider the working-value of a particular form of religion in the wide field of historic experience. In the present instance beyond doubt the historic judgment confirms the validity of the monotheistic faith as against polytheistic, for the former type of religion certainly produces a superior kind of spiritual character and life to the latter. Further, the practical value of a religion is seen in its capacity to develop and to meet the needs of an advancing culture. Monotheism assuredly does possess the power of development to a far greater degree than polytheism, which tends to dissolve and pass away in the presence of growing civilisation.

The conclusion to which we come is, that the problem of validity must be decided by the whole nature of man in its rational and practical aspects, supplemented by the test of working value in human experience. This may not appear a simple test; but the problem to be solved is not simple, and I believe no easier way is open to us. It is natural, when we are dealing with truth, to lay stress on the need that belief should be justified by the intellect; but it is hopeless to make reason the sole criterion of religious validity. This would be feasible could we attain to an absolute knowledge, in the light of which each claim to truth could be finally evaluated. But the claim to complete knowledge breaks down, and we are fated to live in a world which is only partially rationalised. To reject a deliverance of religious experience simply because thought fails to justify it would therefore be wrong, though we may rightly refuse assent to a religious belief which contradicts or is inconsistent with the results of knowledge. It is very desirable that we should judge with a sane and impartial mind the office of reason in determining religious validity, neither magnifying nor minimising that office. At present there is a reaction in favour of empirical methods and tests. The Humanism represented by the late Prof. James loves to depreciate the value of reason in religion, and tends to return to the position of Hume,

who declared that reason is and must be the 'slave of the feelings.' James minimises the very important part played by ideas in religious experience, and consequently exalts the rôle of feeling. So rationality is reduced to a surface manifestation, a process controlled and guided by feeling, and it does not enter into the substance of the religious life. "Rationalisation is a relatively superficial and unreal path to the Deity."[1] If we follow out the line taken by Prof. James, like him proclaiming the helplessness and futility of reason in religion, one cannot see why we should not admit the validity of any type of religion which provokes strong feeling and has had some measure of practical success. Against this theory it is necessary to insist that thought ought to have a voice in the decision. So long as ideas, inferences, and doctrines enter into the structure of religion, reason must be allowed to exercise criticism upon them, and to reject those which will not cohere with the rational view of the world so far as it has been established. Religion, it has been justly said, cannot maintain its claim to truthfulness and refuse to adjust itself to the scientific and philosophic knowledge of the real world.[2] In point of fact it is owing to a failure to readjust themselves, that many religious beliefs have become so discredited that no urgency of feeling can revive them. The importance of theoretical consent is seen in the assumption which most people make, that, though under present conditions they cannot rationally justify certain beliefs, they could justify them were their knowledge fuller and deeper. By safeguarding the privileges of reason we retain the right to examine, and if need be to discard, those anthropomorphic representations which are present more or less in all religions. The ordinary religious consciousness does not raise the question of their validity; but criticism is bound to raise it, and a philosophy of religion which eschewed critical and reflective methods would be worthless. Even though we felt sure that these

[1] *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 414.
[2] Ladd, *Philosophy of Religion*, vol. i. p. 74.

conceptions justified themselves practically, in the interests of religion we should be compelled to defend them against critical attacks. Moreover, there is the further difficulty, and it cannot be ignored, the difficulty that anthropomorphic ideas in religion are seldom consistent with one another. Attributes like justice and mercy, passions like wrath and love, are predicated of the Deity, and are left unharmonised in their working. And if reflective thought be employed to bring about harmony, its right to exercise itself on the representations as a whole cannot logically be denied. The denial of the claim of reason to contribute to the determination of religious validity is, in the long run, detrimental to the best interests of religion itself. For the result of the refusal will be a discord between religious belief and scientific knowledge, which will alienate from religion the most active and progressive minds. This is illustrated to-day by the relation of scientific and philosophic thought to the theology of the Roman Catholic Church.

On the question of the function of reason in religion two extreme views may be taken: it may be said that rationality is a final and exhaustive test of religious validity, and it may be denied that it is a test at all. But though we refuse the second alternative, we are not thereby committed to the first. We have already frankly conceded that we cannot completely rationalise religion. And this is particularly evident in the case of a religion which claims to have a supramundane source, and points to a goal beyond the present order of the world. We are not able, it is plain, to establish the truth of the conception of a Being who transcends the world, through the methods by which we establish the existence of coherence and rationality within the given world. For this would mean that the notion of transcendency was sacrificed and was replaced by a purely immanent conception. Hence the claim of religion to contain a revelation from a transcendent God can never admit of proof in the scientific sense, for such a revelation could never be explained in terms of the mundane order of

experience. But realities which go beyond the mundane system of knowledge, if they cannot be verified through it, ought at least not to be inconsistent with it. A doctrine, even when it claims to be revealed, ought not to contradict our rational knowledge of the world; and if it does so, the claim to be revealed truth cannot be admitted. The details of the Hebrew Cosmogony are an illustration. On the other hand, the testimony of religious people to the possession of a spiritual life proceeding from a supramundane source contradicts no postulate of rational knowledge, though reason cannot demonstrate its truth. In this instance, where reason has no valid objection to urge, the claim to truth would fall to be established by individual and social experience, and by the testimony of history. Here one would justly attach much weight to the evidence of working-value.

The problem of validity in religion, we may be allowed to repeat, is complex and difficult. It cannot be settled on a single principle and in a rapid and clear-cut fashion. Religion involves the whole man, and in judging of religious beliefs we must consider their relation to all the aspects of our psychical nature. Only the mutual support of the theoretical and practical reason can give a sufficient assurance of religious truth. But the question of the ultimate truth of religion belongs to the final stage of a philosophy of religion. In preparation for this, however, it is necessary to discuss a number of important points mainly of an epistemological character. Faith implies a cognitive element, and the religious man claims to have a knowledge of the object or objects which he reverences. Where he does not claim to have a theoretical assurance, he at least asserts that he possesses a spiritual insight and conviction. In opposition to this claim the argument is sometimes put forward, that the nature and limitations of the human mind preclude any real knowledge of the kind. We are told that the forms of thought which man employs to express his religious beliefs are strictly applicable to objects within the realm of mundane experience, and lose

their validity when applied to God and divine things. To speak, for example, of a supreme First Cause, or of a Divine Government of the Universe according to ends, is an illegitimate use of a purely human category. Plainly if this argument can be justified, a great many time-honoured religious beliefs are invalid. In order to meet a sceptical attack from this side we must inquire into the conditions and methods of knowledge, and of religious knowledge in particular. This inquiry will lead up to the final problems of religious philosophy.

CHAPTER VII.

THE NATURE OF KNOWLEDGE.

The nature of knowledge and the validity which attaches to the knowing process are matters of vital interest to the religious philosopher. For there is a cognitive element in faith, and it involves a claim to know. The religious man is deeply concerned to maintain that what is spiritually valuable is theoretically true, and that the ideal is also real. The scepticism which declares the mind, from its nature, is incapable of knowing what is ultimately real, undermines the foundations of religion as well as morality. Man cannot base his trust or found his conduct on assumptions which he recognises to be fictitious. Yet the question of the validity of knowledge is not one which troubled man in the earlier stages of his development; and he had been for ages religious without concerning himself with the inquiry, whether he was capable of knowing a divine Being. To the primitive man whose gods were part of his environment, the question would have appeared unmeaning. What room was there to doubt when the spirits beset him before and behind, and gave constant tokens of their activity! Man was not yet perplexed by the fateful contrast between appearance and reality, and a vision of the night was as real as a presentation to the waking mind. The slow growth of reflexion taught man to distinguish between the facts of sense-perception and the dream or memory image, and hard experience forced him to separate between what seemed to be and what truly was. And in religion the disappointments of expectation as well as the vagaries and inconsistencies of religious

belief, provoked him to doubt whether the things in heaven must always conform to his image of them. This problem once raised continued to haunt men, as we see in the movement initiated by Xenophanes in Greece; and the naïve simplicity and confidence of early belief cannot return. Faith now has to maintain itself against doubt, and on demand it must be ready to give a reason for itself. But if faith in presence of doubt loses something of its young assurance, where it persists it does so in the higher form of deliberate and personal conviction.

An inquiry, therefore, into the nature and validity of knowledge in general is relevant to the question of religious knowledge in particular. Any fundamental distrust of the former involves doubt in regard to the latter. This is true, it may be said, but is a discussion on the nature of knowledge likely to help us forward? Some have argued that any attempt to defend the validity of our mental processes is superfluous; even in the act of defending we are assuming what we set out to prove. For the defence is itself a mental process presumed to be valid. Hegel wittily compared the man who refused to trust his mental faculties till he had proved their reliability to Scholasticus, who declined to enter the water until he had learned to swim. To those who argue that they are only trying to define the limits of knowledge, the rejoinder is ready, that to define a limit means that you have already transcended it. You cannot mark out a boundary without seeing beyond it. We do not dispute that there are elements of truth in these contentions. But they neither prove knowledge to be absolute nor an epistemological inquiry to be useless. If knowledge and reality are not identical, then an inquiry into the nature of knowledge is a proper preliminary to the more fundamental problems of metaphysics. Such an inquiry is the legitimate outcome of the psychology of mental process. The result of a criticism of knowledge should bring out the relation in which knowledge stands to reality, and the degree of justice which attaches to the human claim to truth. But the

boundaries of the province of epistemology are not rigidly drawn, for it merges insensibly into psychology on the one hand and into metaphysics on the other. We may conveniently approach our task from the historical side and begin by considering

A.—Theories of Knowledge.

Every theory of knowledge sets out from experience, and seeks to explain the knowing process revealed there. And if experience is the foundation, it is also the test of theory. In this case it has been common to begin with an analysis of experience in its fully developed forms, and to show what are the implications of that experience. Certain broad facts are admitted by all who deal with the subject. Every one agrees, for example, that experience implies a subject which knows and an object which is known, and the two are intimately related the one to the other. But when we come to investigate the meaning of this relationship the theorists part company, and draw different deductions from the facts before them. On the one hand it is said that the object involves data which are independent of the knowing process, data which are given to the mind and determine the content of knowledge in the mind. On the other hand it is urged that the content of knowledge is a mental content entirely: it is the embodiment of mental activity, and so-called data are only data because they are experienced facts. There is no way outside the circle of experience, and from a reality supposed to transcend experience there is no way to pass within it. We may, however, refuse to commit ourselves to either of these views and look for some *via media*. Instead of setting out from one side of the contrast of subject and object, we may accept the relationship, and proceed by critical analysis to determine what is implied by it. Let us briefly consider these different standpoints.

(a) *The Empirical and Realistic Theory.*

This theory lays stress on the idea that knowledge depends on data which are found by the mind, not made; and these data, it is suggested, are not only the occasions of knowing, but the cause of knowledge. The data themselves, through the continued process of experiencing them, impress themselves upon the mind, and gradually bring about in the mind fixed responses or ways of dealing with them. The evolutionary empiricist would compare this process to the manner in which the environment gradually impresses itself on the structure of an organism. The realistic empiricist further points out how impossible it is to suppose the subject evolves the content of its world from its own internal resources. Rather does the world force itself on us, and we have to accept it. One can often detect underlying this line of argument the naïve assumption that the senses are, not ways in which we experience, but gateways through which experience comes to us from without. People speak loosely of knowledge always coming through the channels of sense, and by a further confusion the channel becomes the source. *Nihil est in intellectu quod non fuerit in sensu*: so we have the conception of mind as a kind of empty chamber that is made the storehouse of experiences which are somehow converted into knowledge. What apparently lends strength to this argument is the undoubted fact, that without experience there can be no knowledge whatsoever, and the old theory that the mind is possessed of certain 'innate ideas' will not bear close examination. Knowledge is undoubtedly the fruit of experience, and neither the philosopher nor the plain man will come to anything without experience. None the less the radical and consistent empiricist who traces all knowledge to a source in sense-impressions is advocating an impracticable theory. Whenever we raise the question in its general form, whenever we ask, with Kant, how experience itself is possible, it becomes apparent that the mind has a functional activity of its own which

it actualises in the process of experiencing. For knowledge is always stated in terms of mind, and is impossible apart from the activity of the knowing subject. Thinkers like Locke and Hume, who are usually reckoned empiricists, do not regard the problem from this general point of view. They ask what experience is, and, by an analysis largely psychological, are content to describe how it develops in the individual mind. Yet both really assume there is more in the nature of mind than pure empiricism can explain. For instance, to take the case of Locke, he will be found attributing to the intellect a power of combining, distinguishing, and comparing ideas, a thing impossible if we are to suppose the 'simple ideas' which are the material of knowledge are also its cause and explanation. The mind is here credited with powers of analysis and synthesis which develop knowledge. Moreover, for a consistent empiricism *real* propositions—propositions which refer to concrete existents—can never have more than a problematical truth, there is nothing to endow them with the character of universality and necessity. Yet Locke is led to assert that the existence of God is a demonstrable and a necessary fact, and has the certainty of a mathematical conclusion.

The motives which influenced Locke to this conclusion are intelligible, but Hume was here truer to the empirical standpoint; for he saw that mere experience, while it can create strong belief, can never generate a necessary connexion. Regarding empiricism in its bearing on religion, we affirm, if it is thoroughgoing, it cannot meet the demands of the religious consciousness. For the object of the religious consciousness is a concrete reality which exists beyond and independent of its realisation in human experience. Such a spiritual Reality lies beyond all presentations of sense. Neither through outer nor inner experience can we reach the idea of God directly and apart from inference. Even the witness of God in spiritual life involves a movement of faith beyond what is given. But if bare experience is the source and measure of knowledge,

we cannot go beyond it. Tried by this rigid test the God of the religious consciousness would be justified neither by logical inferences nor by ethical postulates. Agnosticism would be the consequence, for on this showing religious belief denotes the unverified and the unverifiable. No doubt a great many other beliefs which people are not wont to question would fall to be discarded likewise, for faith enters deeply into human life. And this suggests that pure empiricism is founded on a basis too narrow, and puts forward a criterion which is impossible.

The great fault of thoroughgoing empiricism is its defective conception of what experience really means. It has been misled by the old prejudice in favour of the view that the mind is passive, or mainly passive, in the act of experiencing. If you proceed on this wrong assumption, the universality of what are called the 'laws of thought' must remain unintelligible, and the true character of the mind will be misunderstood. The knowing mind can never be the creation of the data of experience, and no realistic theory of evolution can give even a plausible account of its development. Material causes can only have material effects, and no physiological process can generate a mental process. Empiricism, we hasten to add, is not necessarily materialism; but none the less consistent empiricism fails to recognise the active and constitutive function of the knowing mind. Knowledge as such is never impressed on us from without; it is always a development from within. The so-called data of knowledge have meaning and value only through the selection and ideal construction exercised upon them by the mind itself. A pure datum, or a pure experience, is a fiction, for nothing corresponds to it in the nature of things. At every level of consciousness the active and experient subject or centre of experience makes the experience possible. The truth is that merely empirical contents do not exist: every content from the first is qualified by the presence and activity of the subject whose content it is. If this be so, it is plain that by following the empirical route we have arrived at

an *impasse*, and further progress seems impossible. We have now to find out whether we can come closer to a solution of the problem by approaching it from the other side.

(b) *Rational and a Priori.*

The Rationalistic theory, to adopt a convenient if somewhat loose term, regards the problem from a different standpoint, and treats it by an opposite method to the Empirical. Knowledge, it maintains, cannot be understood as a mass of empirical generalisations from data in some manner given to the mind. Rather must we find its ground and explanation in those rational concepts and universal ideas which the mind uses in the process of knowing. These ideas are not fashioned by the individual, nor are they gradually elaborated by the race to meet the needs of the concrete situation: they are real in themselves, and they are *a priori* in the sense that experience presupposes them. These universal forms or ideas, we are told, constitute the very nature of the knowing subject, or, as others have maintained, they are apprehended and necessarily used by the mind. In either case, knowledge is determined from the side of the subject, and is made possible by the mind's activity. Long ago, Plato gave decisive prominence to this theory, and sought by means of it to solve the problem of predication.[1] The εἴδη or ideal forms were for him the laws or determining principles which moulded experience and endowed it with meaning and value. Knowledge was not developed from beneath, but fashioned from above by the realm of ideas. Significant predication depended upon them, and apart from them it was not possible to know anything; even seemingly solid matter in abstraction from form became a mere shadowy existence, a μὴ ὄν. Aristotle, although he protests

[1] I put the matter thus, for it is possible that Plato was not the absolute originator of the ideal theory. That the εἴδη were much discussed in contemporary philosophic circles is proved by the *Parmenides*, which is not merely the criticism of his own earlier doctrines on Plato's part.

vigorously against what he takes to be the Platonic separation of the 'forms' from individual objects, in substance repeats the message of Plato. For him, too, the form or εἶδος is the essence of the individual, and if we abstract all forms from material objects there only remains an elusive ὕλη. The rationalistic tradition was maintained by the Schoolmen, and was represented in its extreme phase by those who opposed to the nominalists the doctrine of *universalia ante res.* When we come to modern philosophy, Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz must all be taken to support the rationalistic view of experience. A doctrine common to all these thinkers is, that knowledge is not impressed on the mind by real objects which act upon it from the outside. The mind is a closed sphere to external impressions, and thought moves within its own order. Descartes denied all interaction between thought and things. Ideas, taken in the sense of states of consciousness, constitute for him the only order of experience we know: changes in external nature accompany our changing ideas, but they neither create them nor result from them. The same conclusion is contained in Spinoza's conception of the parallelism of thought and extension. The rational concatenation of ideas or concepts makes the process of knowledge, and this process is a series complete in itself. The extended order of things merely corresponds to the internal.[1] The system of Leibniz is in many respects the polar opposite of Spinoza's: yet Leibniz is quite at one with Spinoza in holding that knowledge is an internally articulated whole. The full wealth of its knowledge is developed by each monad from within, and is not due to any communication from without.

From the rationalistic theory of knowledge certain theological inferences have been drawn. The ideas of Plato were found to lead up to and receive their place and value through a Supreme Idea, the Idea of the Good; and this he certainly seems at times to identify with God.[2]

[1] "*Ordo et connexio idearum idem est ac ordo et connexio rerum,*" *Eth.* ii. 7.
[2] *Vid. Rep.* vi. 508.

Similarly the forms of Aristotle culminated in a perfect form, free of material taint, and pure spirit or God, who transcends the world but moves it as object of desire. Descartes, again, found that God was necessary to guarantee the truth of our ideas of external nature, and Spinoza postulated substance or God to embrace in one whole the double orders of thought and extension. Still the idea of God reached in this way does not have the spiritual and ethical characteristics which are essential to the religious consciousness. If we invest the idea with these qualities, it cannot be on the strength of a formal argument. Moreover, there are difficulties in the rationalist doctrine of knowledge which seriously affect the certainty of conclusions that may be drawn from it. It will be worth while indicating what these difficulties are.

Undoubtedly rationalists, from Plato downwards, have exaggerated the importance of the purely formal element in knowledge. After all, the form is only one factor in knowing. It is impossible to see how the individual differences and the specific qualities of concrete objects of experience can be explained by the general form of thought. Reason must have something to rationalise, and thought must have data upon which to exercise its analytic and synthetic activity; and these data can never be reduced to general conceptions. Otherwise you have only the general idea of an object, not the concrete and individual thing. Rationalism in its historic forms has set out from highly developed experience where thought has undoubtedly played an important part. But recognising and accentuating the value of this thought-activity, the rationalist has forgotten the lower stages of experience which prepared the way for it. On a wider view experience is seen to be larger than thought, in fact to be coextensive with life. Feeling and conative factors enter deeply into it, and through all its lower stages they predominate; and it is on the basis supplied by them that thinking consciousness develops. The knowing self is never the whole self. The act of knowledge always refers beyond itself, and thought

is constantly dependent on volitional and feeling elements. Reason as it is revealed in the knowing process is only one aspect of experience, and knowledge could not exist in abstraction from other elements. The defects of dogmatic rationalism and empiricism suggested the propriety of Criticism.

(c) *The Critical Theory.*

Contrasted with Empiricism and Rationalism, Criticism deals with the problem of knowledge in a more careful and a less onesided fashion. It does not set out to explain knowledge either from the real or the ideal side, but by an analysis of concrete experience strives to ascertain how knowledge is possible and what is implied in it. What is presupposed by the fact that knowing minds are confronted with that connected order of things which is the experienced world? Kant's theory of knowledge is the great example of the critical method, and I have it in view in these remarks. The theory itself I will not attempt to reproduce in detail, but will assume some acquaintance with it on the part of the reader. Briefly put, Kant's analysis shows that knowledge implies a material and a formal factor: both are necessary, and neither is reducible to terms of the other. Matter of sense must be given, but forms of perception and conception are involved in the mind's representation of a world of objects. Kant once and for all made clear that the activity of the knowing subject is necessary to the existence of knowledge: the organisation of experience in a coherent whole is a process which essentially depends on the unity and activity of self-consciousness. Kant, however, does not find that the mind, in virtue of experience, can develop and modify the forms through which it constitutes its represented world. And he tends to narrow down the question of the possibility of experience to that of the explanation and justification of the scientific consciousness. Hence he has a limited and specific type of experience mainly in view. By thus restricting the scope of his

problem, Kant failed to give it the necessary largeness of treatment, for this can only be gained by taking the scientific consciousness as part of a wider experience. But putting the problem in the way he did, he concluded that the perceptive forms of space and time, and twelve categories or forms of judgment, are *a priori* elements: they are *a priori* in the sense that they are necessarily involved in the 'transcendental unity of apperception,' in the mind's consciousness of itself in relation to an orderly world of represented objects. If in spirit Kant desired to think things together, his actual method was to bring forward the elements of knowledge each by itself and sharply marked off from the rest, a procedure alien to the principle of organic growth. Lacking the notion of a historic growth of experience, he thought to tabulate fully the *a priori* concepts of the mind in his apostolic group of twelve categories, and so gave his theory an artificial and a false completeness. Another consequence followed. If, as Kant believed, the *a priori* forms are the only forms through which a valid knowledge is possible, then any assumed knowledge which transcends these forms must be invalid. Hence, when we go beyond the understanding with its schematised categories, and seek rational completeness in experience; when we endeavour to rise to the idea of a systematic whole which embraces knower and known; when we try to conceive a soul or self which has a reality apart from the specific forms in which it knows: in each case we have ceased to know, and fall into hopeless contradictions. So the Kantian philosophy secures the validity of knowledge by severely restricting its scope. From this limitation results significant for religion flowed, and these were carefully pointed out by Kant. Theoretical knowledge of God, freedom, and immortality we could not have, for these ideas all lay beyond the field in which valid knowledge was realised. Yet as little could science disprove them, for it overstepped its lawful bounds in trying so to do. Kant was not an agnostic, and he thought he was doing religion a service in showing it dealt with things

which are theoretically unknowable. For Kant, religion was purely matter of faith, which begins where scientific knowing ends; and faith he curiously supposed is knowledge in a practical regard. The will, or practical reason as he terms it, in its activity is forced to make certain practical presuppositions or postulates, and these postulates or necessary practical demands turn out to be just the ideas which pure reason put forward, but theoretical criticism showed to be illegitimate. It was a dubious benefit to religion to show that its claims to know were untenable in theory though justifiable in practice. Kant's solution of the religious problem simply amounts to a clear delimitation of spheres: the will in its province legitimately postulates what the theoretical reason legitimately denies. But we cannot admit that theoretical and practical reason are distinguished and contrasted in this way; and faith and knowledge are not separated as Kant supposed. Kant's work was extraordinarily fruitful and rich in suggestion; yet taken as a whole we cannot accept it, and this largely because he approached the problem of knowledge with preconceptions which are now seen to be inadmissible. In his general conception of the function of criticism, Kant was right. The successful method of handling the problem of knowledge is not by dogmatic assumptions, but by a critical study of the process itself. Nevertheless the scope of the inquiry must be wider than Kant believed. A theory of knowledge cannot be adequate, if it takes no account of psychological, social, and historic development. Some evidence for the latter statement will be found in the following section.

B.—The Development of Knowledge.

It became increasingly plain during last century that the problem of knowledge, like the problems of biology and sociology, must be treated from the standpoint of development. To begin like Descartes with fully developed self-consciousness, and go on to ask what is implied by it,

is to reverse the right order of procedure. For full-fledged personality presupposes a long course of biological and social evolution. The sharp contrast of subject and object, and the clear differentiation of outer and inner experience, are not facts which were given from the first. Human experience has various stages, and experience itself is wider than its human form. When we trace experience backward the plain distinctions drawn by the developed mind are gradually obliterated, and sensation, perception, and thought become merged in a continuum of feeling. The conscious recognition of sensation as such is relatively late, and going downward we reach a point where subject and object are not distinguished, and experience is no more than the awareness of a content which is quite indefinite. There is no warrant for the idea that experience begins with a manifold of sensations: the notion that the primitive data of experience are a multitude of isolated sense-impressions is a fiction whose currency was greatly due to Hume. The truth rather is that experience begins with a feeling-continuum in which differences are submerged. From such an elementary or low-grade experience progress ensues by a process of differentiation; and the gradual recognition of differences within the whole, on the part of the experient, means the gradual increase in clearness of consciousness. The more experience tends to a monotonous uniformity, the lower does the light of consciousness sink; and it is in and through the diversities of its content, that the self comes to know itself as a centre of interest and activity. Progress lies in the steady and increasing definition of the subject over against the environment or object; and this signifies the grouping together of a body of feeling-experiences which are referred directly to the self, and contrasted with those which are referred to the not-self.

It is not of importance for our purpose to discuss the details of this differentiating process, but it is necessary to insist on the prominent place and function of conation. Only when we recognise the central part played by conation,

do we realise the connexion of the biological and the psychological sides of knowledge. The cognitive interest, it has been said, is immediately rooted in the biological interest, that is to say in the tendency which pervades each individual life to realise and maintain itself.[1] The will to know grows out of and, in the first instance, subserves the will to live, while the latter involves a constant selective activity exercised in the processes of appetition and aversion. Conation is here fundamental, and the organism only survives because it reacts selectively on its environment in ways which conserve its life. Through all the stages of experience, from rudimentary instinct to reflective thinking, there runs a purposive activity; and the value which objects receive in relation to that activity gives them their place in experience. Intellection continues and raises to a higher level the selective process already exhibited in instinct, and the first function of intelligence is to read meaning into experience, so that experience can be turned to account in the attainment of proximate ends.[2] There are no breaks in the evolution of knowledge: one stage passes insensibly into another, and what comes after is prepared for by what has gone before. At the lowest level is the mere feeling of awareness, which is, however, only possible through the presence of conation. This conative activity, working in the form of selective interest, is the condition of that further organisation of experience which is manifested in sense-perception. At the perceptual stage there is still no distinction of the sense-presentations from objects: to the perceptual consciousness the presentations are themselves the objects. In perception, however, a process is already immanent which eventually transforms experience, and gives us our human world as we know it.

[1] H. Maier, *Psychologie des Emotionalen Denkens*, p. 158. The biological factor in knowledge has received much attention in recent years. It may suffice in this connexion to mention Simmel and Jerusalem, Bergson from his own point of view, and, among English writers, Professor J. Ward and L. T. Hobhouse.

[2] Cp. Hobhouse, *Mind in Evolution*, p. 270.

Repetition leads to recognition, which is based on memory; and through repetition the mind develops associations, universalises, and rises to the apprehension of meaning. This investment of the elements of experience with meaning is the condition of learning, and it is the special prerogative of man. In man the great development of the memory and association areas in the brain form the physiological basis for those processes of conceptual thinking which are his peculiar characteristic. Thought purposively directed upon the complex of perception works it up by analysis and synthesis, and defines for us an orderly and related world of things. The scientific consciousness is the ripe fruit of conceptual thinking. Kant's great mistake—a mistake natural to his age—was to regard mind as from the first a fixed organisation of categories; for the conceptual process is essentially a development which implies social organisation and the growth of social experience. The instrument of conceptual thought is language. Language fixes the concept in the significant sound or word, and thus makes it generally available. In its origin, purpose, and growth, language is conspicuously a social product; it evolves by means of intersubjective intercourse, the interaction of mind with mind. Speech, indeed, is not possible without thought, but just as little is thought possible apart from speech: the one implies the other and both develop together. This proves beyond cavil that we ought not to treat the problem of knowledge from a merely individual standpoint. "Any treatment of thought which abstracts from the characteristic of community, from the social nature which man shows here as everywhere, must be onesided and untrue."[1] If we are asked, then, how the individual mind comes to know objects, we reply that the more relevant inquiry is, how does the individual mind develop so as to be capable of knowing objects. Not by itself certainly, but as member of society and heir to a social heritage. The system of concepts by means of which man organises his knowledge is the outcome of a

[1] Sigwart, *Logic*, vol. ii. p. 6, Eng. tr.

long social development, and is thus placed at the disposal of individuals. There can be little doubt that conceptual and socialised thinking lies behind what, at first blush, might seem a primitive fact of experience, the distinction of an outer and an inner world. For conceptual thought is needed to fix and generalise the idea of an external world, and we only find our internal world, so to speak, by defining it over against the external world. This is really a developed way of construing experience which social evolution has helped to make possible. Hence the remark of Professor Royce is perfectly true: "A child never gets his belief in our present objective world till he has first got his social consciousness." It is important to insist that the conceptual process, by which man universalises his experience and sets before him the general conception of an external world, is likewise the means by which he develops his awareness of self as a centre of feeling into the notion of a self-contained sphere of inward experience. Inner and outer experience develop *pari passu*, and the enlargement of our knowledge of things is also an enlargement of our inner life. This twofold expansion of knowledge has its ground in the growth of selves interacting with one another in a social system. We shall merely fall into confusion if we assume that the contrast of inner and outer is an ultimate and primitive datum of experience.

We conclude that the evolution of knowledge issues out of the wider evolution of experience, and is its maturest fruit. The active centre of experience, which has merely a feeling-awareness of content, is continuous in the line of development with the subject of conceptual or universal experience which sets the world of known objects over against the world of knowing selves. In this way, by following the developmental method, we can, it is suggested, do away with the dualism of subject and object that threatens us if we begin with an analysis of the completed result of the process. Originally sense-presentations were the objects themselves, and in the presentation subject and

object were identical: if we suppose they were different from the first, then, it is argued, there is no way of passing from the one to the other. But if we start from the primitive unity of thought and being, the contrast which by and by emerges between the presentation and the object, between the appearance and the reality, reduces itself to a difference *within* knowledge, to the difference between perceptual and conceptual knowing. The defining and generalising movement of the conceptual consciousness, in giving fixity to the idea of the object seems to endow it with a permanent being of its own.[1] To discuss this view adequately would carry us beyond the scope of the present discussion. Something will be said on the point afterwards; in the meantime it will suffice to warn the reader that the conclusion suggested above does not necessarily follow. Conceptual knowledge can make explicit differences which were implicit in the original presentation-continuum, but it has not been shown that it can evolve distinctions which have no ground in the nature of reality. Differences, though submerged at the rudimentary stage, are not thereby obliterated. And in regard to the ultimate difference which finally takes form in the contrast of subject and object, it is not enough to posit an original identity on the plea that otherwise knowledge is impossible. For this has to be proved.

C.—The Presuppositions of Knowledge.

Having indicated what we take to be the broad lines on which knowledge evolves, we have still to ask what the process presupposes. What is implied in the fact that the mind knows a world of objects, and finds its knowledge practically valuable? If the knower and the known cannot be reduced to an identity; if the knowledge of the object does not constitute the existence of the object; then it must follow that there is interaction between the knower

[1] This is Wundt's theory. *Vid. System der Philosophie*, 1889, p. 90 ff. Cf. König's *Wundt als Psycholog und als Philosoph*, 1902, pp. 60–62.

and the known, and the object which is given in knowledge is the fruit of that interaction. Now commerce of this kind is not possible unless there is an inner adaptation or harmony between the subjective and objective factors of this cognitive process. In virtue of this adaptation, the transsubjective reality becomes qualified as a content of consciousness, and expresses itself through presentation to consciousness. The theory of knowledge, it seems to us, presupposes this, though its ultimate justification, if it can be justified, will lie with metaphysics.

The further question arises: What character or structure in the knowing mind does the knowing process postulate? We have seen that knowledge cannot be mechanically impressed on the subject from without; for the knower is essentially active in knowing, and the object in consciousness bears the impress of that activity. But if the subject is active in knowing, is the form of his activity due to the objects he cognises? or does it presuppose *a priori* principles, or elements which belong to the nature of mind? The cumbrous Kantian epistemology, with its apparatus of pure perceptive forms, of schematic, of categories, can certainly not be accepted as it stands. Kant neither did nor could show that all these were presupposed in the consciousness of self. Yet we can see that the knowing self has certain implications, and these may be fairly termed presuppositions of knowledge. There are general conditions which underlie all thinking, principles which are already immanent in the earliest development of thought, laws which the mind brings with it to all investigation of experience.[1] All thought presupposes the principle of identity. Sameness, whether in the subject or in the object, implies identity—identity which is contrasted with differences and is maintained in them. A perfectly abstract identity is meaningless: difference in some form is always necessary to a true identity. The type and foundation of the law of identity is the identity of the self which persists

[1] Cf. Sigwart; *op. cit.* vol. ii. p. 17.

through its changing states. An object which exists *for* itself possesses an identity which may be recognised, but is not made by another mind. Yet identity in an object can only be known by us through that identity in ourselves which is implied in any exercise of memory. Only because we are conscious of ourselves persisting in time can we be conscious of the object persisting in time. The reference of the subject's states to the self as a sustaining identity is the condition of the subject and predicate relation, which is the universal form of the judgment. Moreover, while the principles of identity and difference are at the basis of knowledge, and implied in all mental activity, our self-consciousness presupposes a *continuity* between the differences. The interest and attention necessary to consciousness would be impossible, if the diversities of experience were not susceptible of some kind of connexion. A perfectly disjointed experience, between the elements of which there was no line of transition, would not be an experience which a self-conscious mind could recognise as its own. The existence of continuity is a demand which the mind makes on experience; and the presence of continuity enables the mind to arrange its knowledge by finding similarities and dissimilarities, and to maintain a unity of interest despite the diversity of elements amid which it moves. The simplest forms of continuity are coexistence in space and succession in time. Most important is the way in which the mind has developed the principle of continuity in dealing with experience: it has done so through the idea of dependence, of logical connexion, or, as it is sometimes expressed, by the idea of Sufficient Reason. This principle is in its nature a demand of the mind, a demand that, given certain elements, we can proceed by inference to other elements which are implied in them. Logical dependence signifies that we can pass from one element to another through reference to an identical ground which mediates the transition: and the same notion of an implication between elements—in this instance conceived in

the form of correspondence—lies at the root of mathematical dependence or function. In dealing with experience this principle of a connexion between things is central in the procedure of mind; and when there is an appearance of discontinuity between parts of our world, we do not take the appearance for reality; we regard it as setting the problem for thought to show that a connexion exists. Of course in practice man is not interested in trying to show connexions everywhere: in this and in other matters he is guided primarily by his needs, and he begins by selecting and attending to those features in his world which practically concern him. He is pressed to understand in the first instance, in order to employ his knowledge in the service of life. And it is very plain that, if man did not find regularity and connexion among the objects in his environment, he could not manage to survive.

Based on the logical laws or postulates of thought, and derived from them, are two concrete categories,—categories which we habitually use in dealing with things, though they owe something to the shaping influence of experience. I refer to the conceptions of substance and cause. In regard to the latter, there can hardly be room for doubt that the logical principle of ground and consequence is the pattern on which it is founded.[1] Causality is a specific and more concrete application of the general law of connexion. Cause and effect always denote a form of dependence, but not all dependence is causal: a mathematical function, for instance, signifies a dependence, but it does not imply a causal relation. There goes with the idea of cause and effect a definite reference to time and the order of succession, which is not involved in the notion of logical ground and consequence. Moreover, there is associated with the idea of cause an idea of dynamic efficiency by which it brings about the result. The ordinary and even the scientific mind are haunted by the notion of a force or influence passing from the cause into

[1] Cp. Eisler, *Einführung in die Erkenntnistheorie*, 1907, pp. 165–66.

the effect. Beyond doubt this notion is the fruit of man's experience of his own power to bring about movements of his limbs, and he has read his own experience into the objects which surround him, endowing the natural cause with the same power that he believes he recognises in himself. This is one of many illustrations which show how hard it is for civilised man to purge himself of that primitive animism which lies behind the development of science and religion. It cannot, I think, be successfully maintained, that this concrete conception of the causal relation is *a priori* in the sense which Kant imagined. I question if anything more than continuity in the relation of cognised elements is presupposed in self-conscious experience, or, as Kant put it, in the transcendental unity of apperception. For surely the knowing self can apprehend a succession which is not causally determined in its order; Kant certainly has not shown this is impossible, and there may be continuity without causal connexion. In the case of substance, the conception is ultimately derived from the unity of the self or subject, which maintains its identity in its different states. These states are conceived to be the predicates which qualify the identical self, the attributes which belong to the subject. Here we have the type after which man interprets the things around him. Originally these things were believed to be living substances with qualities, centres of force with ways of acting analogous to man himself.[1] By and by this naïve animism is corrected, and over a great region of experience the conception of dead matter is substituted for vital energy. But still the notion of a thing as a substratum or substance in which qualities inhere survives in our common thought, and constitutes a pattern after which we habitually arrange and group our experiences. If we are asked *what* a thing is, we at once proceed to refer to it certain attri-

[1] In a suggestive way, W. Jerusalem has connected the animistic conception of things as centres of force or activity with the evolution of the subject and predicate relation in the judgment. *Vid. Die Urtheilsfunction*, 1895, p. 91 ff.

butes or modes of acting. It much depends, no doubt, on our special interest or purpose what we regard as things: at one time we separate between certain things, and at another time, and for another purpose, we combine them in a single whole. But the general schema of substance and attribute is preserved amid diversities of application, and its use has become almost an instinct. In distinction from the logical subject and from the logical ground or reason, substance and cause are real categories. They are not, as Kant supposed, eternally fixed forms inherent in the structure of the mind; they have to some extent been shaped by experience, but have now hardened into fixed ways in which the mind organises its world. The complete justification for their use cannot be found on the side of the subject alone: their use must be warranted by the reality which is known as well as by the nature of the subject which knows. The knowing mind, thereby giving more concrete expression to the laws of thought, develops these categories in order to organise its experience. But if there be transsubjective realities, they cannot be rightly construed by any category which may be selected by the subject. Categories which are adequate must be *bene fundata*, in other words they must interpret that real world which the mind knows in part, but does not create. This, of course, raises the question how knowledge can be knowledge of what is real, and we have to face the general problem of the validity of knowledge.

D.—The Validity of Knowledge.

The naïve mind is aware that errors are possible, but it fully believes it is able to know things as they are. For reflective thinking, however, this conclusion seems premature, and the doubt arises whether our so-called knowledge is not of appearance merely. The issue comes to be this: Can we suppose the content of our subjective act of apprehension characterises reality? Are the presentations of sense-perception valid for the real world? And do

our inferences hold good in the supersensuous sphere? It has been noted already that the relation of the content of consciousness to the independent object cannot become a problem until there has been a development of conceptual thinking. For conceptual thought distinguishes the elements of the cognitive process, and contrasts the generalised object with our fragmentary experiences of it. Moreover, on this level the thinking process differentiates itself from the knowing process: for not all thinking is knowledge; but thinking can assume the function of a means to knowledge, and we habitually think in order to know. This is illustrated by the more or less elaborate processes of inference by which we deduce from known data a further knowledge. It is thought which develops the intellectual constructions that form a kind of bridge from the truths we know to new truths, and when such inferences justify themselves they go to form part of the growing body of knowledge. The civilised man, through the medium of spoken and written language, receives a rich inheritance of thought, and is thereby made partaker of the results of the process of ideal construction by which the developing race has made experience coherent.

But however sure the thinker may be of the value of this heritage, however ready he may be to maintain its substantial truth, he cannot fairly defend the notion that it is a complete and perfect expression of what is real. For it is clear that reality is wider than experience, and experience in its turn is richer than thought. It is equally plain that errors are constantly being made, so that what at one time is taken for knowledge turns out to be fictitious. The existence of error, the fact that people may believe to be real what in the end turns out to be unreal, forces them to consider the problem of the validity of knowledge. Man interprets the presentations of sense, and believes that a certain result follows; but a further experience teaches him his belief has gone beyond his data, and the reality is different from what he supposed. Re-

curring experiences of this kind compel him to admit that he does not always know when he thinks he knows, and appearance sometimes wears the garb of reality. So, further reflexion raises the question, how far he can be sure he has any adequate knowledge of the real world. For scientific thinking dispels the naïve belief that the world given to us in sense-perception is identical with the world as it is in itself. The apparently solid object science resolves into a moving system of atoms, and the colour which adorns it into the oscillations of an invisible ether. But while science dissipates the naïve view of things, scientific theories are not always consistent with one another, and they are constantly changing. If this bewilders the common man, the man of science shares his perplexity, and a recent scientist has told us: "We do not know, and are probably incapable of discovering, what matter is."[1] A doubt of this kind easily induces a more general doubt in regard to the powers of the knowing mind, and may provoke a sceptical reply to the query, Can we know what is ultimately real? or, is our knowledge valid?

With some persons a proper answer to these 'sceptical doubts' would be to say, that, if our knowledge is a makeshift and an inadequate device, still it is sufficient in point of fact for our mundane needs: it serves us to manipulate things in our own interests. But if this answer is enough for some, it is peculiarly unsatisfactory to the religious man, who is concerned to maintain he has a knowledge of a Reality that transcends this matter-of-fact world. The religious philosopher at least should not refuse to meet the argument, that there is something in the nature of knowledge which renders it invalid or inherently inadequate to reality. Only by repelling this attack can he secure his own position. In offering some observations on this subject, let me first remind the reader that complete scepticism is illogical and refutes itself. Even a 'spirit that denies' must stand somewhere in

[1] The late P. G. Tait as quoted by Pearson, *Grammar of Science*, p. 247.

order to deny, and, though only to knock down, a man needs a foothold. The doubter at least assumes the validity of his grounds for doubting. But however prone we are to doubt, we find we cannot consistently doubt, as Descartes said, the certainty of our own existence. And there are some kinds of immediate knowledge whose truth it would be absurd and meaningless to deny. To say that immediate judgments of consciousness, like "I am hot" or "I am hungry," are false, is a statement without any possible justification, and it must be rejected at once. There are other forms of immediate judgment which are likewise unimpeachable. That "two and two make four," or that "a circle is not a triangle," or that "the whole A is greater than its part B," are judgments of relation which are immediately evident, as Locke held. No mediate inference could strengthen or weaken the certainty of these judgments. Generalising we may say that there are judgments of consciousness, of existence, and of relation which we are intellectually obliged to regard as valid. Were they invalid no rational deduction would be possible. The process of proof is an articulation of elements within experience: it runs back in the end to first principles which are not capable of proof but are grasped intuitively.[1] Yet one has to remember that a great many judgments which wear an appearance of immediate certainty to the individual, really involve interpretations of sense-data or of subjective experiences, and so are not immune from error.[2]

Nevertheless the validity of certain intuitive judgments comes very far short of securing the validity of knowledge as a whole. For a great part of our knowledge is conceptual and mediate: it is knowledge about things, and stands or falls with the validity of the reasoning process.

[1] Aristotle, it is well known, pointed this out: *εἰ γὰρ ἀνάγκη μὲν ἐπίστασθαι τὰ πρότερα καὶ ἐξ ὧν ἡ ἀπόδειξις, ἵσταται δέ ποτε τὰ ἄμεσα, ταῦτ' ἀναπόδεικτα ἀνάγκη εἶναι*, *Anal. Post.* i. 3, p. 72, 6. 18.

[2] As in sense-perception which involves unconscious inference, or in mystic experience which implies interpretation.

The sphere of conceptual thinking, expressed in universal judgments, is the sphere of generalised knowledge and of science. Here an elaborate activity of mind is revealed in distinguishing and relating, and organising experience in universally intelligible ways. Thought has now gained freedom and mastery in dealing with its materials, and in its operation transcends what is given. But the endeavour of developed reason to interpret and explain the world by a process of ideal reconstruction is by no means uniformly successful. Errors are possible, and they occur: theories are put forward and have to be modified, and perhaps, after a while, modified again. Hence some regard a scientific theory as no more than a convenient hypothesis by which we try to systematise for the time being a body of judgments in some particular sphere. The errors to which we are liable and the provisional character of many of our theories, have suggested to some, as I have already said, a doubt whether our conceptual processes are at all adequate to the apprehension of reality. May not our thought, by its very form, be inherently incapable of grasping the true nature of things? Knowledge is a distinguishing and selecting activity: in the judgment, subject and predicate are set over against one another, and the *that* of things is severed from the *what*. Is not this to distort and mutilate reality for our own purposes? Is not this *ipso facto* to sacrifice any claim to the truth of our judgments? Reality must be a whole, perfect and harmonious, so it transcends our relational thinking which, by its method of procedure, sacrifices all claim to truth.[1]

[1] The philosophical reader will remember that this opinion has been urged with great power and keenness by Mr. F. H. Bradley in his *Appearance and Reality*. Mr. Bradley accentuates the distinguishing and separating side of thought to the disadvantage of its connecting aspect, and only reaches Reality in a whole of feeling which transcends the form of thinking. Relational thought in his view is condemned to move in the realm of appearance. His position, however, is not completely sceptical, for he believes there are degrees of truth, stages in the adequacy of knowledge. But the question remains, whether we could define 'degrees of reality' without any knowledge of Reality itself. Moreover, Mr. Bradley admits that an idea, though inadequate to reality, works or gives practically

Those who are not Pragmatists may still find in the pragmatic method, which emphasises the working-value of ideas and the satisfying experiences to which they lead, a wholesome corrective to sceptical doubts about the validity of knowledge. The plain man who finds knowledge serves his turn will not despair of it. The sceptic, as Hume frankly admitted, lays aside his scepticism when he leaves the study and goes forth into the world. And it is a fair argument that theory should not be sharply sundered from practice: the one ought to support the other, and if we find knowledge subserving life in the experience of everyday, the fact should weigh with us when we feel inclined to doubt the validity of knowledge. The departmental conception of human nature is never satisfactory, for it is essentially artificial; nor is it consistent that we should trust our powers of knowing in common life and doubt them when we make them the object of reflexion. The sceptical thinker, confronted with this dilemma, refines and distinguishes. That which is practically useful, he tells us, need not be perfectly true, and concepts which help us to manipulate experience do not on that account reach to what is ultimate and real. The case is like that of a provisional hypothesis, which is useful in a certain field and for a certain purpose, but has no claim to be strictly true. As Kant has shown, judgments which are effective in one sphere may beget contradictions in another. And though our knowledge serves for the day and place, this does not prove it ultimately valid.

If this line of thought can be fully maintained, the consequences to religion, as we have already remarked,

satisfactory results. This admission should surely carry him further than he has gone. More recently M. Bergson has argued that thought, by the static character of its forms and the constant use of spatial imagery, is incapable of apprehending real duration in which the elements interpenetrate. Thought artificially fixes the real, which is a flux of becoming. So Bergson believes reality is only grasped by intuition. But thought is not so bound down to spatial images as Bergson supposes; and the demand that change should be related to the permanent is not artificial.

are serious. The only logical issue of this speculative scepticism would be religious agnosticism, and the refusal to concede more to religious beliefs than a kind of practical utility. By way of reply I would urge that we are entitled to lay much more stress on the practical working of knowledge than our opponents allow. No doubt the existence of errors warns us that representations in consciousness are not always adequate. Yet the fact that we come to see their inadequacy and correct them shows we have means of verification at our disposal. You cannot recognise an error without some knowledge of what is true. The elimination of faults of judgment and mistakes in theory, and their replacement by judgments and theories which give better results, argue that we make progress in our interpretation of reality through the forms of knowing. One cannot understand how, if the relation of subject and predicate is a mutilation of the real, man could, in virtue of his thinking, act and react successfully upon his environment, A conception which operates effectively in experience must interpret, not falsify.

Against the argument that thought, in the judgment, separates and so does injustice to what is essentially a whole, the answer is that the movement of thought, while true to its own laws, is conditioned in their application by the nature of the object. Cognition, it has been said, has objective conditions without which the subjective process would be ineffectual, or rather would not exist at all.[1] Thought does not create, nor in knowing does it arbitrarily combine, the differences with which it deals. Kant laid stress on the active function of the subject in cognition, but it is also necessary to insist that there must be unity and order in the world of objects, ere it could become the content of knowledge. Not creative synthesis but ideal reconstruction, taking form in representation, is the office of the knowing subject.[2] It is, however, easy to fall into

[1] B. Varisco, *I Massimi Problemi*, 1910, p. 96. The writer's treatment of the implications of sensation and cognition is very clear and able.

[2] Cp. Varisco, *op. cit.* pp. 99–100.

confusion if we suppose that conscious states are existences interposed between the knowing subject and the cognised object, existences which assume the fashion of representations, and float, as it were, between the subject and object. The truth is that objects exist in consciousness, and mind is expressed through consciousness: consciousness is not a sort of *tertium quid* between the two. The self is the unity in all states of consciousness; and the cognised object as content of consciousness is an expression of the nature of the transsubjective real, or the way in which it acts. At every stage of experience, from feeling to cognition, an interaction of subject and object is present; and it is true to say that sensation or cognition is a revelation of the nature of the object as well as of the subject. Even when we are only conscious of the object as a felt whole, its qualities and their orderly connexion are implicitly present to feeling. They gradually become explicit and define themselves in the growing consciousness of the subject. The process is the explication in consciousness of the nature of the object; and the orderly differences in the object which mind explicates become a means whereby the *ego* grows increasingly conscious of itself. But the important point to remember is, that the mind does not and cannot superimpose an order of its own upon an alien object. What it represents in terms of its own activity must express the qualities and connexions of the object, as they reveal themselves in and are interpreted by the cognitive subject. The content of our cognitive consciousness, though it manifests the nature of the object, is not, it need hardly be said, identical with it. Whether in perceptual or in conceptual knowledge, there is always an element in the object which goes beyond our knowing, and the existence of transsubjective reality is the *sine qua non* of interaction between the knower and the known. The extension of the real beyond its presence to the experient subject is necessary to explain the concrete variety of experienced objects. The different applications of a general principle of synthesis—say the causal judg-

ment—can only be explained through the specific character of the elements which are synthesised, not through the form of synthesis itself. This character the cognising self expresses in its own way, but it does not create it. So we come to a result quite opposed to the well-known remark of Kant in his *Critique*: "The order and conformity to law in the phenomena we call nature we ourselves introduce."

At this point a difficulty must be considered. If it were possible to maintain that the character of our experience, its specific features and their connexion, were entirely due to the organisation of the knowing mind, then the validity of our knowledge would seem to be secured by the constitutive nature of our intelligence. For the test of knowledge would lie within knowledge: the coherency of our representations with one another would ensure validity. But if we are constrained to admit the existence of transsubjective realities, the case is altered. We cannot have a direct knowledge of what is transsubjective save in the aspect in which it is revealed to consciousness, and to compare our representations with the reality beyond them is in the nature of the case impossible. You can compare a percept with a percept, but not with something not perceived. But though the transsubjective cannot be immediately known, it may be known *mediately*, and by inference we can go beyond what is given in the medium of representation. Moreover, if we are right in concluding that cognitive activity is an interpretative or reconstructive process, we can draw inferences from the object cognised about the structure of the real. The practical success of our knowledge would be impossible, if the object in its ultimate nature were not allied to the subject. If in knowing things we obscured or distorted their nature, we could not by means of this quasi knowledge successfully manipulate them; and if the inner being of things were totally alien to consciousness, we could not know them at all. The inference from the fact that our knowledge works is, that

the relation of the self to its states, which is the ground of the reference of predicate to subject, stands for a structure of reality which is typical, and extends downward into the so-called realm of matter. If the core of reality be individualities which maintain themselves in their changing states or qualities, then the form of conceptual judgment does not distort but expresses their nature. So the form in which our mind can alone know an object would, at the same time, be the explication of the nature of the object. From this point of view we can see that the growth of experience from feeling-consciousness to perceptual and conceptual knowing is the continuous development of a single process, and in this process the structure of reality is gradually defined and expressed in a system of judgments. We know reality and not mere appearance, because we interpret and reconstruct the real.

Epistemology runs back to metaphysics, and the full justification of the view suggested in the foregoing paragraph must be reserved for a later chapter. At the same time we have come far enough to see there is good cause for maintaining that knowledge is valid, and sound reasons against supposing it is fatally inadequate to reality. Those who are still inclined to doubt may derive encouragement from the way in which the knowing process works in the service of life, and they may receive confidence from the manner in which errors are corrected and knowledge is verified. Of course certain other problems are raised by the forms of religious knowledge, problems not directly involved in secular and scientific knowledge. Nor does it follow that those who are assured of the adequacy of the latter will also be convinced of the adequacy of the former. But a well-founded assurance of the validity of knowledge in general is necessary, if we are to deal hopefully with the problem of religious knowledge. When the foundations of secular knowledge are shaken, the edifice of spiritual knowledge can hardly be secure.

CHAPTER VIII.

RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE.

The question how far religious persons really know the objects they reverence, is one man can hardly help asking, when he has begun to reflect upon himself and his experience. Even before he had deliberately doubted the validity of his knowing processes, his own hard fortune had suggested doubts about the supersensuous beings he worshipped. Continued apathy and neglect on the part of his gods would tend to provoke perplexity and uncertainty on the part of man. And with the development of reflexion the question would be directly raised, whether the supposed knowledge of divine powers was a real knowledge. Let us begin our discussion of the problem of religious knowledge by a short statement of what we find in religious experience.

A.—The Attitude of the Religious Mind to its Object.

Although it may involve some repetition, it will conduce to clearness if we regard the way in which the developing religious consciousness relates itself to its object. This consciousness is a historic growth passing through different phases, and the object undergoes development in a way that corresponds to the development of the subject. It is usual to speak of the process by which man apprehends his gods or God as knowing; but it is not knowing in the form of understanding, or of explaining in the scientific sense. It is rather the knowledge of practical acquaintance,

or the familiarity born of experience, and it is expressed in the first instance in the form of naïve belief. This belief is distinguished from sheer matter-of-fact belief by its strongly emotional tone, and also by a reference to something more than is directly given—to something which lies beyond the immediate environment. Man with his strong self-conserving impulse finds the belief of primary value, and so he develops it; but to begin with, it is an act of apprehension whose content is vague and fluctuating. Out of the life of impulse grows the larger world of desires; and desire gives birth to that imaginative activity which expands and enriches the religious object, so that it may respond to new human needs and demands. This conative process revealed in impulse and desire, and always working purposively, has its maturer fruit in those processes of knowledge by which man adjusts means to end, and so gives greater stability and harmony to his life. But the demands of life thus expanded require a deeper conception of the religious object which is to satisfy them: moreover, as the counterpart of knowledge, there develops the spiritual attitude of faith, by means of which the religious personality strives to enter into an enduring and helpful relation with the Being whom it reverences. On the level of imaginative representation, anthropomorphism is rampant, and the gods are freely credited with the worst as well as the best passions of their worshippers. They are subject to anger and jealousy, love and revenge, and the elements of character evolved in the social life are transferred to the deities who preside over it. These imaginative determinations of religious objects prevail at a stage of culture which precedes the scientific consciousness, but when that consciousness develops it soon comes into conflict with the traditional religion. On the other hand, at the stage of personal faith, the purified spirit develops a conception of God in consonance with its own character. The wilder embellishments of the imagination cease to have a value for the spiritual consciousness, and the object of its faith represents the demands of its own inner life. Yet spiritual

faith, like pious imagination, does not bring to its task the methods of the critical understanding or of scientific explanation. The heart believes its own reasons are independent of the understanding, and sufficient apart from it. And where the religious consciousness is intense, as in the prophet and spiritual leader, faith is its own assurance and draws from its own inward fulness. This upward movement of faith is the living spring of personal religion, and it establishes that direct and sympathetic converse with the object, on the part of the subject, out of which the inner religious life grows. In practical experience we find the existence of a sympathetic *rapport* between ourselves and another human character is a condition of our insight into the motives and significance of that character. Something similar holds of our relation to the object of our religious reverence. The knowledge of God which is distinctly religious is based on the affections and the will, not on grounds which are purely intellectual. Religious experience conditions religious insight: this seems to be the element of truth in the old contention, that faith must precede understanding. *Credo ut intelligam* was the motto of Anselm, though it is well to remember he added: *negligentia mihi videtur, si postquam confirmati sumus in fide, non studemus quod credimus intelligere.* And the same thought of the need of a believing knowledge is set forth in the *Theologia Germanica*: "He who would know before he believeth cometh never to true knowledge." [1]

This truth of an experimental knowledge of divine things has always been cherished by the spiritually-minded ones whose religion has grown out of their life. It appears prominently in Pietism and Mysticism. But beyond question the truth has been obscured, and the situation complicated, by the intrusion of alien considerations.

[1] *Theol. Germanica*, cap. 48. In the same chapter the following suggestive words occur: "We are speaking of a certain Truth which it is possible to know by experience, but which ye must believe in, before ye know it by experience." Here we have a natural development from belief, through experience, to spiritual knowledge.

Experimental insight has been mixed up with theoretical knowledge based on evidences as well as commended on grounds of authority. The way in which this confusion was brought about is fairly plain. Faith-ideas were elaborated into religious doctrines, and finally fixed in theological dogmas; and the living movement of faith, which had fashioned itself out of historic experience, hardened into a well-defined opinion, held in deference to the Church or because it was supposed capable of rational proof. One need hardly say that, when religion passes into an institutional and dogmatic form, the value of this form tends to be exaggerated, and that at the expense of the spiritual experience which is more essential. This tendency takes an extreme shape when the historic order is reversed, and the acceptance of the doctrinal system is declared to be the condition of the spiritual experience. The outcome of this movement is a perplexing juxtaposition of faith and reason, of the practical and the theoretical kinds of knowledge. The idea which issued fresh from the experience of faith was afterwards shaped into a religious doctrine by reflexion, and then connected with other doctrines: by theological thought it was raised to an explanation of religious and other experience, and enunciated as a theoretical truth. But in this process there has been no real interpenetration of faith by reason: the latter has simply come in as an auxiliary, by and by thrusting itself to the front and illegitimately claiming the whole product for its own. The consequence is, that rationality is asserted of doctrines which have never really been scrutinised and tested by reason. In the Scholastic Theology we see the *impasse* to which we are brought, if we claim theoretical validity for dogmas whose foundations we refuse to subject to rational reflexion and criticism.

There can be little doubt that the transformation of faith, from a spiritual insight based on experience into a holding for true on grounds of tradition and authority, has been of fateful significance. It has helped men to confuse the framework of religion with its vital spirit,

and prompted them to magnify quite unduly the importance of doctrinal knowledge. It has made it possible for theologians to dignify with the name of faith an unreflecting acceptance of dogmas and traditional interpretations, while it has rendered it harder for many to believe that a man may have the spirit of faith who refuses to reverence the letter. Faith in the sense of theoretical knowing, faith which means a holding for true on the church's authority, is a derivative and secondary product of religious history, from which the elements of value in the earlier use of the conception have well-nigh vanished. Faith often means no more than this for many, when the institutional side of religion greatly preponderates over the personal, and when those constitutive spiritual experiences out of which the religion issued are passing into the region of tradition. The result is an impoverishment and weakening of the religious spirit, and the decay of what is vital in religion.

This identification of faith with a supposed theoretical knowledge has worked against a *rapprochement* between the scientific and the theological mind. Theologians, assuming that their doctrines had theoretical value though not theoretically thought out, advanced them as explanations of facts within the world of experience; and these explanations were frequently in conflict with the explanations evolved by scientific reflexion. To take an illustration: theology explains the origin of man by a divine act of creation at a specific time and place, while science regards him as the outcome of a long process of evolution. In their present form the two views cannot be reconciled, and it is better not to attempt it. In a dispute of this sort the position of the theologian was seriously weakened by the tacit assumptions he had made. On the one hand, he assumed the doctrine he taught could be taken for scientifically valid, and any conclusion of science which conflicted with it must be false. On the other hand, while making this claim, he had withdrawn the doctrine which was the original premiss of his argument from

the criticism of thought, on the plea that it was guaranteed by a divine authority. This blending of the rational and the supra-rational was open to hostile and effective criticism from the side of science; and the scientific thinker naturally contended that the theologian ought not to appeal to reason at one time, and to invoke authority at another time, according as he found it convenient so to do. To stand wholly on the one ground or the other was at least intelligible, but to shift from the one to the other was unjustifiable. The situation, I think it will be admitted, was unfortunate, and was the result of mixing up the facts of religious experience with pseudo-scientific deductions from them. The trouble was closely connected with the ambiguous use of the term faith at the hands of theologians, the term now denoting an insight born of spiritual experience, and again a theoretical knowledge resting on adequate evidence. The whole problem therefore deserves discussion, in order if possible to remove ambiguities and difficulties. More especially will it be necessary to consider carefully whether we are justified in distinguishing religious from scientific knowledge, spiritual from theoretical knowing. If we are right in so distinguishing, the question remains how the one is differentiated from the other, and how the two are related to one another. The problem is not a simple one, and a perfectly satisfactory solution may not be reached; but it demands discussion in the interests of truth and good understanding.

B.—The Sphere and Character of Religious Knowledge.

(a) *Religious Knowledge and Empirical Knowledge.*

It will be generally admitted that religious knowledge does not develop after the fashion of scientific knowledge: it is not a gradual winning of assured results by a process of analysis and synthesis, of induction and deduction,

—a process which tests what is given to us in experience. Facts of experience are no doubt the occasion and stimulus of spiritual discernment, but it is the needs and demands of the inner life which call forth into consciousness the object of religious faith. And that object differs from the object of scientific investigation which occupies a place in the visible and extended world; for it lies beyond the region of sense-perception, and its existence cannot be verified by any appeal to the senses. Religious knowledge, in the proper sense of the word, neither is nor claims to be the knowledge of scientific understanding; and this ought to be remembered by those who seek to discredit it for not being what it does not pretend to be. Men believe in their gods because they need them, not because they can understand them or explain things through them. If scientific knowing is the only form of knowing, as some suggest, then of course religious knowledge is an illusion. But the premiss is just what has to be proved; and until it is proved, it is irrelevant to complain that religious knowledge does not satisfy the conditions of scientific knowing. "It is wrong always and everywhere for any one to believe anything on insufficient evidence," so wrote the late Professor Clifford. The suggestion of course is, that religious belief, being based on insufficient evidence, is illegitimate. We may remark in passing that, if religion is to be condemned on this score, our daily conduct would fall under the same condemnation, for we all live and work in the faith of the future. Another writer reminds us that "our desires and aspirations are not a guarantee of reality," in other words are not "a sufficient evidence" of truth.[1] The whole point of these criticisms lies in the assumption that scientific knowledge is the only pledge of truth, and therefore what does not conform to its rules ought not to be taken for true. Religious representations do not so conform, for they are imaginative, uncritical, and subject to no logical test. In reply it may be said,

[1] J. E. McTaggart, *Some Dogmas of Religion*, p. 56.

that the religious man only lays claim to scientific knowledge when he has reached it by scientific methods: but he contends he possesses a religious knowledge, a knowledge which is not scientific yet none the less valuable and trustworthy. The problem therefore is, whether, and how far, the examination of religious experience endorses the reality of such a form of knowledge.

At the outset let us guard against an extreme statement of the case. The existence of a form of religious knowledge does not mean, and those who accept it should not say, that it differs *toto cælo* from theoretical knowledge. Both forms of knowledge are sustained by the personal self, and they alike imply an activity of thought and memory. Both work through the medium of language, and make use of the generalisations which language supplies. It is possible to go further, and to maintain that the symbolism, which is a noteworthy feature of religious knowing, is not absent in the case of theoretical knowledge. In the previous chapter we have tried to argue for the conclusion, that the object of outer experience, as it is presented to the subject, involves the existence of a transsubjective reality which the subject accepts but does not create. Consequently our knowledge of the external world is an ideal construction which rests on a process of interpretation. These interpretations of sense-affection have acquired a common form and value in the process of intersubjective intercourse, and constitute the content of our ordinary knowledge; but in the end they are interpretations, not the transsubjective reality Regarded from this point of view they are symbols, or, to use a figure, they are current coins which denote generally recognised values, and so facilitate the process of interchange. Nevertheless they are not symbols which veil the real; rather do they help to reveal it to us, for they interpret its way of acting. Now here we have a process in the sphere of theoretical knowledge which is akin to the process which takes place in the sphere of faith. For faith means a relation of the self to a

divine object that it takes to be independently real, an object which the self conceives to act towards it in determinate ways.

The nature and acting of his God the religious man interprets through the language of spiritual emotion and the forms of practical life. The deity loves and grieves; he is a monarch who rules his human subjects, or a father who blesses his earthly children. Here too we have symbolism; and the symbol is not to be absolutely identified with the reality, though it may reveal in a suggestive way the character and action of the divine object. The scientific and the religious mind alike find the symbol makes possible an effective working relation between man and the reality which lies beyond him. Both alike recognise the existence of this relationship, and seek to act upon it in the interests of human well-being. Hence we deprecate the attempt to separate absolutely, and to oppose the domains of spiritual and empirical knowledge. They differ, no doubt, but not entirely; and if the scientific thinker may criticise the use of particular symbols by religious people, he cannot wholly object to symbolism without criticising himself.

On the other hand, it is not hard to see that the method and the interest of religious knowledge are different from those of empirical knowledge, and a marked difference of spirit is the result. The inductive and deductive methods of empirical science, and the mode of explaining objects within the given world of experience by showing their place and relations within a connected system of things, do not directly concern the religious man. Scientific explanation is, in fact, inapplicable in the case of a Being who transcends the external order of reality, and is consequently not to be understood through it. The atmosphere in which the religious spirit moves is one of reverence and mystery, and in the clear and cold air of scientific explanation it cannot breathe freely. Theoretical explanation has grown out of the needs of life: religion, too, is an outcome of the needs of life, but

the knowledge it aspires after is knowledge of a direct and personal kind. The mediate knowledge of science goes back to immediate apprehension as its foundation; and it is at this point that scientific knowing and religious insight disclose a common lineage. For both set out from immediate experiences, but the lines on which they have developed run apart. In the case of science a system of factual judgments has been evolved, while the personal value-judgments, if not suppressed altogether, at least fall into the background. In the case of religion the value-judgments have always been primary and central: the religious man knows the object of his reverence first and foremost as a value in relation to himself. Put briefly and tersely, he seeks to know God as the Supreme Good who satisfies the soul, rather than as the Being who explains the universe. This knowledge is practical: it has its motive in the interests of the spiritual life, and is concerned with the working relations of the human spirit to the Divine. The judgments of faith, it has been said, express what God is for us, not what he is in himself.[1] This implies that spiritual insight is in terms of value; it is therefore personal throughout, the fruit of faith which is prompted by the inner needs of a spiritual person.

But, it will be asked, can a knowledge so bound up with the desires and needs of the inward life be taken for all it claims to be? Can it be defended against the imputation of being purely imaginative? and, if not, does experience encourage us to trust the workings of the religious imagination? These are important questions.

The answer to these questions will ultimately depend on the interpretation we put on spiritual experience and the movement of faith which is its outcome. Faith is the expression of the active side of our nature, and is a mark of a purposive and forward-looking mind: it denotes the practical response of the spiritual self to its own inner needs and demands. The object of faith is the

[1] R. A. Lipsius, *Glauben und Wissen*, p. 19.

postulate which the soul makes, that it may realise the value it desires and deems essential to its own well-being. So the religious man knows his God as the Good through which he finds self-completion and inward peace. And it is in and through the spiritual function which the divine Object fulfils in his experience that he claims to know it. The relation is ethical and practical, and the knowledge arises out of sympathetic fellowship and communion of spirit. The spiritual worshipper claims to know God through his spiritual experience and the ideas which issue from it. Faith on his part, he would say, evokes a response on the part of God which works experience, and experience in its turn begets knowledge. A familiar illustration of this process is St. Paul, for the apostle's insight into divine things grew in the first instance out of his inner experiences. Nor is it relevant to object that a knowledge like this is impossible: in these matters logical argumentation will neither show what is possible nor what is not possible; we must just consider the facts and draw our conclusions from them. Now the case of religious knowledge does not stand alone. The genius of the artist or the poet, working on a basis of profound sympathy with the object, develops a knowledge which is intuitive rather than logical. Nor does any amount of detailed information about a bygone age enable a great writer to recreate its life for us with convincing power: he must have the insight born of sympathy. So too in practical life, sympathy and fellowship between human souls beget a knowledge of the one by the other which is not gained by processes of reasoning and is yet real. And it is a truism to say that experience of life is the source of a discernment which cannot be won by mere intellectual keenness. A great drama has a fulness of meaning for the man of mature years, who has tasted the joys and sorrows of the world, which it cannot have for the youth. The words are the same, but the message they impart is different: the elder man, interpreting them through his wider experience, finds in them a deeper

significance. Here then we have a sympathetic discernment, which is the outcome of life developing in us the appreciation of values; apart from life-experience, man cannot fully know himself and fairly judge his fellows. The knowledge of which we have been speaking may be called experimental, and it is the kind of knowledge the religious man claims to have of the object of his reverence. It rests on spiritual sympathy and communion, and develops into the knowledge of practical acquaintance and appreciation, tempered by the feeling of familiarity and confidence. And if it be true that there is a wisdom and discernment that issue out of life-experience, the claim of the religious man to possess a practical knowledge of God ought not to be lightly dismissed. No fair judgment of what the experience can yield is possible apart from the experience itself; and to the individual who has it, the insight it gives seems real and satisfying, and he needs no better assurance. "I know in whom I have trusted": "I sought the Lord, and he helped me": this is the confident acquaintance of the religious soul. But though the spiritual worshipper finds the witness of his own experience sufficient, the very strength of his practical conviction and the feelings which are linked with it, urge him to claim theoretical validity for the object of his faith. This raises the question how far a claim to be true theoretically can be justified on the ground of an inward and personal experience. There is something, it is said, intimate and private in this personal experience, and it lacks the objectivity and universality of theoretical knowledge. In the face of the varieties and fluctuations of inner experience among individuals, caution, we admit, is necessary in drawing general conclusions from it. Many will feel that a broader and firmer basis is desirable than purely individual experience can supply. Such a basis might be won, if it could be shown that the experience of the individual was part of a wider and a historic experience which maintains and reproduces itself from age to age. Undoubtedly a consistent historic testimony,

if such can be proved to exist, would be much more convincing than the witness of isolated individuals. For the normal character of the religious experience would be assured by this cumulative testimony. This is not the place for a psychological inquiry of the kind, but I shall touch the question at issue so far as to ask, whether the study of historic religious experience yields an adequate insight into the meaning and ideal of religion.

(b) *The Religious Ideal and Historic Experience.*

By the religious ideal I mean the true nature of religion, the idea of what religion ought to be. The religious consciousness moves in the realm of values. Value-judgments presuppose and rest on a Supreme Value, and this plays an important part in defining the religious world-view and shaping the ideal of religion. Life and its meaning for us will always depend on what we conceive to be best and most important, that is to say, on our conception of value. Now the spiritual values, and so the religious ideal, are beyond doubt an outgrowth of historic experience, and have been gradually defined in the process of human development. They issue from the nature of man himself, and are the expression of his perennial needs and desires. And human nature can only be understood through its actual working, through the way in which it has developed itself in the historic process. A purely rationalistic or *a priori* conception of what is the highest and best religion for man, would remain quite a vague and formal test which would not decide anything; to have any worth it would require to be filled out and modified by experience. Moreover, those who adopt this *a priori* method make the mistake of arguing from human nature as if it were a fixed magnitude, everywhere and always the same, instead of a developing reality which, in the process of developing, gradually gives meaning and content to the religious ideal. The religious nature of man only reveals itself in its development. Any attempt to define

the essence of religion apart from the realisation of religion in history, will only yield an abstract and impracticable conception, like the 'religion of nature' excogitated by the English Deists.

Objections have been taken to the attempt to reach the true nature or ideal of religion from the study of its history. Of course, if you insist on identifying religion with a system of universal and rational truths, it is plausible to argue that these do not depend for their validity on historical experience. One recalls the oft quoted saying of Lessing: "Contingent truths of history can never prove eternal truths of reason." And alongside this saying we may set the remark of Fichte: "Not the historical but the metaphysical makes religion." People now have mostly lost their faith in an eternally valid system of metaphysics, and not unnaturally. The mistake in the present case lay in the failure to see that a living and spiritual religion is essentially a historic development, and grows out of the past like a plant out of the soil. Herder recognised this, for he said: "Fact is the ground of all that is divine in religion, and religion can only be presented in history, in truth it must become a continuous and living history." Nor can any one study the working of one of the higher religions, like Christianity, without realising that it represents a growing experience, mediated by great personalities and maintained and carried forward by the movement of the historic life.[1] One thinks of the central and enduring importance of Christ for Christian experience, and of the value of great and commanding figures like Paul, Augustine, and Luther. Their influence is a spiritual influence proceeding out of the historic life, and their value and significance cannot be reduced to certain general principles. The religious society, as it

[1] A. Dorner, it seems to me, unduly depreciates the importance of the historical element in religion when he suggests that the notion, that history is the guarantee of salvation and the foundation of the religious consciousness, is only a transitional point of view which must be transcended. *Vid. Religionsphilosophie*, p. 378.

develops in time, conserves and carries forward the spiritual life, and enables successive individuals to share in the continuous spiritual experience. By sharing in the experience the individual enters into the religious insight and the spiritual values which are the heritage of the religious community. If it be true then, as we have already suggested, that there is a practical knowledge in religion which is the fruit of personal experience, we must recognise that this personal experience is stimulated and nourished by the wider life of the religious organism or church. In this way a living relation between the spiritual present and the spiritual past is secured, and the religious values which are the object of faith are maintained amid a changing environment. This continuity of spiritual experience gives a weight and impressiveness to the claims of faith greater than that of any individual testimony. Here is a fact which no student of religion ought to ignore. There must be an inherent vitality in a spirit which, though old, is ever new, and comes to utterance on the lips of many generations.

But, it may be asked, does historic experience suffice to define the religious ideal apart from theoretical reflexion and criticism? Does history simply set the truth before the eyes of all those who care to read its message? Now here we must bear in mind that *a priori* construction is one thing, and rational reflexion on what is given in historic experience is another; and to affirm the inadequacy of the former is not to deny the value of the latter. Nor are faith and rational reflexion antagonistic. Faith and thought are alike outgrowths of the historic life, and have their interests determined by that life. The one cannot be completely separated from the other, since both are aspects of the activity of the personal self. There ought to be interaction between them in the interests of the harmony of the personal life. And if we exclude theoretical reflexion, and assume that the ideal of religion is determined altogether historically, there are certain objections we must be prepared to meet.

In the first place, the religious values differ in different religions, and they are not exactly the same in a single religion at different epochs. The historic evidence therefore does not give a consistent conclusion; and if we are to exercise, as we must do, some criticism on historical values, we shall be compelled to bring in considerations which are not purely historical. Again, it cannot be said that the historic process sets before us a clear outline of the ideal truth of religion; for the essential and the secondary are intermingled, and accidents sometimes obscure the substance. A work of criticism and appreciation is needed, to bring out the central values by reference to a standard of value. This process can never be accomplished without theoretical thinking, which goes beyond what is given in religious experience, and considers that experience in relation to the larger whole of knowledge and life. Historical experience in religion, if we keep strictly to it, that is to say, does not present us with the clear and coherent testimony which is necessary to the statement of truth. The movement of religious experience is of fundamental importance, and from it we must set out; but it does not bear the truth on its surface, and only reflective thinking can elicit it. Religion is more than reason, but it cannot discard reason without failing to make good its claim to be objective and universal. Thought must exercise its critical and selective function, if the essential in religion is to come to its own and receive due recognition.

(c) *Authority and Religious Knowledge.*

If reflexion has a part in determining the ideal of religion, can it also pass criticism on the claims of religious knowledge? It is sometimes argued that religious knowledge is its own authority. Are the adherents of a religion then entitled to demand, on the strength of their spiritual experience, that the world-view of their religion should be universally accepted? Religious world-views

unfortunately differ. On what grounds are we to justify the demand in one case and reject it in another? Let me begin the discussion of these matters by reminding the reader, that the religious subject always claims that the object of its reverence is real, and the relation in which it conceives itself to stand to the object is true. This assertion of truth has an affective or emotional ground. "I feel it to be so, and I cannot doubt it," so the individual exclaims, and this is sufficient for him. But psychological fact does not spell logical validity. It is impossible, as the psychologist well knows, always to take the subjective feeling of certainty to be an adequate guarantee of truth. A man cannot, indeed, be mistaken about the fact that he has such and such an experience, but he may very easily be mistaken in regard to the inferences and the meaning he connects with it. Every religious experience has these implications, and their truth cannot be ensured by the subjective feeling of certainty. Alike in secular and in religious knowledge, experience involves interpretation and inference, and it is here that the possibility of error and illusion is given. Accordingly, if we urge the strength of personal feeling as the authority for the truth of our religious beliefs, the reply will be made, that feeling has not saved man from countless mistakes in the past, and there is no pledge it will do so in the present. Moreover, when my emotional certainties are not the same as those of another individual,—a thing which often happens—it is futile to suppose that my feeling should be authoritative for him. He will reply: "You cannot expect I should believe as you do, for I do not feel as you do." And there is nothing more to be said. This difficulty emerges more particularly on the higher levels of religious life, where religious experience has a markedly personal and inward character. Hence men have seen the need of some firmer basis of authority than can be gained by an appeal to the feelings.

The great spiritual religions have sought to establish their authority by claiming to possess truth divinely

revealed. This at least is true of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. And the possibility of a revelation must be admitted by all those who accept, or even by those who do not reject, the theistic conception of the universe. If the human spirit is intimately related to the divine, and there is interaction between them, it may surely be that there is a communication of knowledge to man on the part of God. This revelation would not take the form of an imparting of information from without, but would rather consist in the heightened spiritual consciousness which gives birth to insight. Revelation, in other words, would be inward and spiritual: in any other form it could only be secondary and derivative. Yet though we grant revelation is a fact, still it is realised through human media, and the difficulty will always be to disentangle the divine elements from the human, and to determine what is truly authoritative. In the historic working out of a religion it was natural that the principle of authority should be made to cover a wider and wider field: the records of religion, the system of dogmatic theology, and the organisation of the church were all placed beneath its shelter and protection. To those who ventured to doubt and criticise, the answer was ready: "The authority is not human but divine." These claims would not bear close examination; and those who were not able in every case to admit the reality of the authority invoked, but were not willing to abandon the principle, had to face the problem of distinguishing the divine from the human in the content of religion. Now that what is divine is self-evident no one will assert who knows anything of the history of religion, and the controversies over the essentials of religion. To call in reason to decide what is human and what is divine is to admit that reason has a function in determining the truth of religion. Those who refuse to concede this right to reason must fall back on the witness of feeling manifested in the strength of personal conviction. "This is an authoritative truth because I feel it, I personally experience it, to be so." A recent theologian has declared that

nothing can be surer than personal experience, and this, of course, is true if it merely refers to our awareness of the experience. But it is not true, as we have already pointed out, if you are to include the interpretations you put on the experience and the inferences you draw from it. The writer in question has to admit that subjective illusions do occur in religion as elsewhere, and he seeks a corrective for them in the wider experience of the Christian society.[1] And no one will dispute that historic experience is a better test than individual feeling. But, as we have already argued, historic experience taken simply by itself offers no adequate criterion of religious validity. History presents us with the materials for forming a judgment, but we have to bring to history the discriminating and appreciative mind. And if you are to evaluate the body of experience which lies behind a particular doctrine in order to determine its authority, you must critically test the experience by bringing it into relation with the larger world of knowledge and life.

There will be an opportunity of dealing with some of the issues raised by the problem of authority in religious knowledge in the following chapter, where we shall discuss the problem of religious truth. But I think it can be inferred from what has been said, that the idea of a merely external authority in religion cannot be consistently defended. After all, the force of an appeal to such an authority lies in the recognition which it evokes, and an authority to be spiritually valuable must be accepted by the spirit. Now it is vain to expect that all the doctrines based on the testimony of a church or of sacred writings will be accepted in this way; for they do not form a perfectly coherent whole, and in the interests of harmony it is necessary to select and criticise. When we proceed to select what shall really be authoritative for our spiritual life, our own sense of value will decide; and this means that the final court of appeal is within rather than without, in the witness of the spirit rather than in an external

[1] Lipsius, *Glauben und Wissen*, pp. 57–60.

authority. The inward response alone will make the outward claim effective. Is not this in substance, it will be said, to reduce the principle of authority in religion to the interior witness and assent of the individual soul? This is not a fair inference. If authority is to be spiritual, it can only be actual in the personal consciousness of individuals. But an individual, by his spiritual act of assent, does not confer authority in the larger sense upon a doctrine. The doctrine, we must remember, comes to the individual from the historic past of religion, and it represents a historical value. And while the individual makes the value living and operative in the present, he cannot be said to create it: it would be truer to say that *it* goes to create the content of his spiritual life. In fact, the principle of authority is neither purely subjective nor purely objective: it is subjectively realised, but depends on objective conditions. The witness of the spirit divorced from the historic life of religion furnishes no stable basis of religious truth. And the consistency of religious doctrines with theoretical knowledge still remains to be settled.

The sufficiency of subjective or inward discernment of religious truth can, no doubt, be plausibly urged. The principle of spiritual religion lies in the relation of personal spirits to one another, and this, it is argued, quite transcends the purview of scientific thinking. God, the great object of religious knowledge, is only revealed through piety. He is not an outward fact to be observed, and he cannot be demonstrated by the logical reason.[1] There is much in this contention which is true and important, but it does not suffice to show that the inward witness of the spirit alone is the adequate sanction of religious knowledge. Those who hold this theory forget what the religious mind implies and postulates. No religious person supposes that his religious knowledge is valid only for himself. Faith has a cognitive aspect, and it claims to have a cognitive value. The world-view which faith develops the religious man asserts has a theoretical as well

[1] So A. Sabatier, *Phil. de la Religion*, p. 376 ff.

as a religious value. The mind refuses to divorce practical and theoretical truth from one another, and to treat them as belonging to alien spheres. Nor can it be otherwise, since the realms of faith and knowledge are the outcome of the same personal life and reveal the work and interest of the one personality. That faith and knowledge should not act and react on one another would be a psychological impossibility: the unity of consciousness is compatible with distinctions but not with departmental divisions. The proof of this intercourse is seen in the influence the growth of knowledge has on the content of religious faith, and in the response of the religious spirit to changes in the intellectual environment. It is likewise apparent in the way in which faith strives to show its consistency with the assured results of science, and seeks in theoretical knowledge a support and confirmation for its values. In so doing the religious spirit instinctively feels that it is fortifying and securing its own position. On the other hand, when theoretical knowledge is at open discord with a doctrine of religion, faith in the doctrine is undoubtedly weakened.[1] It is true, but it is not relevant, to say that the objects of spiritual faith are not capable of proof in the scientific sense. For objects which are held by faith, when considered in their implications, are susceptible in various degrees of harmonious or discordant relations with the body of scientific knowledge. To take an illustration. The religious idea of God can involve a conception of his nature and way of acting which may or may not harmonise with scientific knowledge. There is a conflict, for instance, when religious people declare that a plague is solely due to the wrath of the Deity, while men of science show it is the consequence of flagrant disregard of sanitary laws. When there is a discord, the human mind, by its very

[1] This may be denied, and we may be reminded of the sayings, *credo quia absurdum est*, and *credo quia impossible est*. But while it is true that there is an intense and fanatical conviction upon which reason can make no impression, the statement in the text holds good in the long run, and of individuals on the whole.

nature and tendency, seeks, if it can, to resolve the discord into a harmony. And this because man demands to be in harmony with himself. Though it is necessary to distinguish spiritual from theoretical knowing, they cannot be sharply separated, and both are factors in the working out of a comprehensive end. For all knowledge ought to subserve the realisation of the good, and, whether in its scientific or religious aspect, it has its goal in a complete and harmonious life. This being so, authoritative value in religion will not depend on any single principle, nor can it be decided on any simple and clear-cut method. It involves a harmony of several elements, and is a matter of degree. The degree will be the greater, in the measure that religious knowledge unites harmoniously with other human activities in realising human good.

To put the conclusions of this section clearly and briefly. Religious knowledge issues from personal experience. This experience, however, must be corrected and confirmed by the wider experience of the historic religious community. Thus the religious man's knowledge is personally realised and historically grounded. Yet not even on these terms has such knowledge finally vindicated its authority. To this end spiritual knowledge must be brought into relation with the body of theoretical knowledge, and the two must at least be capable of being consistently thought together. The more fully these conditions are implemented, the more completely is authority secured.

C.—Special Problems of Religious Knowledge.

No knowledge is complete, and religious knowledge has obvious limitations. However convinced a man may be in his religious faith, he cannot but realise that faith does not completely reveal to him the nature of the Object he reveres. The points of light stand out to his vision against an intervening darkness. Mystery is never absent from religion: it forms an element of the atmosphere in

which the religious spirit lives and breathes. A religion without mystery would be a contradiction. Renan has remarked: "A religion as clear as geometry would arouse no love and no hate." Even those who emphasise the scope and power of human knowledge do not dispute the fact that there is much of which man is ignorant, much that he is never likely to know. "The scheme of Providence," says Bishop Butler, "the ways and works of God, are too vast, of too large extent for our capacities." Yet the fact of this ignorance does not make Butler mistrust or depreciate our knowledge of divine things. "If a man were to walk by twilight, must he not follow his eyes as much as if he were in broad day and clear sunshine? Or if he were obliged to take a journey by night, would he not give heed to any light shining in the darkness, till the day should break and the day star arise?"[1] This is the right ground on which to stand, for it is equally removed from the pride of absolute knowledge and from the despair of agnosticism. This is the sane attitude in which to deal with the problem of religious doubt.

(a) *The Significance of Religious Doubt.*

Alike in the logical and in the historical order of development, doubt presupposes belief. When we doubt or deny we must have some positive statement before the mind which we call in question, and we do so in virtue of some other judgment which we affirm or believe. In the evolution of religion, doubt as a distinct tendency can hardly be said to exist at the primitive stage, for man's critical faculty is dormant and belief is natural and easy. The naïve trust or credulity of early man is not readily shaken, and survives many disappointments. Even the later period in which religious imagination was building up polytheistic systems was, on the whole, free from denials and questionings. But the development of the reflective spirit inevitably brought about a strain between

[1] Sermon, *Upon the Ignorance of Man.*

thought and imagination, and the result of this tension was religious doubt. The old Greek and Roman religions furnish apt illustrations of the emergence of this process, and of the disintegrating influence it exercises on a system of beliefs. The process of questioning once begun does not cease: the spirit that doubts and denies persists, and forms an element in human culture against which all the higher religions have to contend. Various causes may provoke a special activity of scepticism at a particular epoch, but more often it will be a combination of causes. Religion is far older than science, and the doctrines of a venerable religion will always offer points of attack for the shafts of sceptical criticism. There come times, too, in the evolution of culture, when the religious life beats feebly and faith sinks low: disillusionment is rife, and the old spiritual values themselves become objects of doubt. Men begin to count as loss what their forefathers deemed to be gain. Seen through the gloom diffused by pessimism, the old ideals become blurred and the ancient certainties are no longer sure:

> "Ah, what a dusty answer gets the soul
> When hot for certainties in this our life!"

And when there is the mood to doubt, there emerge reasons and reasons for doubting. The critic notes the blind traditionalism which hampers religion, and points to the conflict of creeds to show how the supposed truths of faith clash with one another. Or perhaps he moralises over the changes of belief which mark the evolution of a religion, and draws the lesson that no belief can be reckoned fixed and sure.

On the philosophic side a justification for doubt has been found in the theory of the necessary limitations of human knowledge. Long ago Thomas Aquinas declared that an understanding of the Creator transcended the capacities of the creature: *comprehendere deum impossibile est cuique intellectui creato.* In the middle of last century Hamilton, followed by Mansel, argued that the human

mind was inherently incapable of comprehending an absolute and unconditioned Being, and faith in revealed truth was all that remained for man in this regard. The argument of Hamilton and his disciples has not carried conviction, and it seems to rest on a twofold fallacy. On the one hand, he erroneously identifies the Infinite with the merely unlimited or boundless, and goes on to confuse the fact that man cannot represent this infinite with the assertion that he cannot think it. Again, he confounds the truism that all knowledge involves relation with the profoundly misleading statement, that to know in the form of relation means a relative or unreal knowledge. Of course, if our minds must proceed by dividing and relating, while the Absolute, or God, is beyond relation,—a great assumption—then we cannot know him. Yet the advocates of nescience apparently knew enough to know that the Absolute and Infinite existed, and was necessary to explain the finite.[1] Herbert Spencer, who set out from the epistemological premisses of Hamilton and Mansel, was content to affirm that we had "an undefined consciousness of the Absolute," though at the same time declaring that "the reality underlying appearances is totally and for ever inconceivable to us." Spencer did not, like Mansel, ask for an unreasoning faith in revelation, and his agnosticism is so far consistent with his premisses. But he mistook the nature of the religious consciousness when he supposed that it was essentially "the consciousness of an incomprehensible power." The epistemological basis of the agnostic movement in Hamilton, Mansel, and Spencer is so radically unsound, that their conclusions are hopelessly vitiated. An Infinite Being who does not enter into relations, and cannot be understood through the relational form of thinking, is a mere figment of the philosophic imagination. The religious mind is not concerned to affirm the existence

[1] "We know that unless we admit the existence of the infinite, the existence of the finite is inexplicable and contradictory; and yet we know that the conception of the infinite itself appears to involve contradictions not less inexplicable." Mansel, *Metaphysics*, 1866, pp. 382–383.

of such a Being, and in the nature of things could not worship it. Religion, it has been truly said, does not ask us to believe what contradicts thought: it asks us to believe in an object which corresponds to the needs of the inner life and the will, and does *not* contradict thought.[1]

But if the plea for philosophic nescience, in the form urged by Hamilton and Mansel, has ceased to be convincing, other and more subtle reasons are put forward in behalf of religious doubt. If we cannot definitely limit the sphere of human knowledge, still, it is pointed out, the further we depart from the field of positive experience where our conclusions can be tested, the more do we enter a region in which the truth of our judgments is problematical and uncertain. The religious consciousness, we are told, forgets too readily that what holds in the realm of the material and temporal may not hold in the realm of the spiritual and eternal. Religious predicates are commonly developed by the help of imagery, and in dependence on traditional forms which have not been critically examined; hence there is no assurance of their accuracy. Imagination, says a recent religious philosopher, is for religion what the concept is for science; and in the form of poetic representation faith asserts what thought cannot justify.[2] By its free use of earthly images the religious mind, in trying to make the divine intelligible, ceases to conceive it truly, and offers a fancied knowledge which covers a real ignorance. As the outcome of this way of thinking we have what may be termed a critical agnosticism, which is based on the inadequacy of human ideas and analogies to describe the supersensible and transcendent world.

Religious doubt, when advocated in this way, is more skilful in its attack and more difficult to parry. It is so because the attacking party has a certain amount of truth on its side which the defenders of religion cannot afford to ignore. No one can deny that the claims to knowledge

[1] Paulsen, *Einleitung in die Philosophie*, p. 345.

[2] Rauwenhoff (*Religionsphilosophie*, pp. 474–475). "Die poetische Vorstellung ist für den Glauben, was der Begriff für die Wissenschaft ist."

made by religion have often failed to stand the test of growing experience and critical reflexion; and popular religion has sometimes gone to extravagant lengths in describing the other world in terms of the present. These are cases where criticism denotes a healthy and rational reaction. We can therefore see that the pressure of doubt has frequently been a means of spiritual progress, for it has urged men to advance to more profound and adequate conceptions of spiritual truth. The questioning and sceptical spirit, springing up within a religion, is sometimes the ferment which brings about the transmutation and development of a narrow and traditional creed. The enlightened man will not then regard religious doubt as necessarily evil; it may be the instrument of spiritual progress, and the occasion through which religion develops a form more adequate to its content. But against the more radical forms of doubt which are devoid of sympathy and understanding for religion, those who have the interests of religion at heart can say a word in defence of their faith.

To begin with, they will insist that no claim is made to a complete knowledge on the part of faith. All that the religious consciousness affirms is, that it possesses a real though limited knowledge of God and divine things, and this has been realised in the medium of spiritual experience. If theologians have sometimes laid claim to a knowledge more ample, in so doing they have gone beyond what the testimony of religious experience warrants. When theology, for instance, expounds the metaphysical attributes of God, or unfolds the divine method of creation, it has entered a region which is largely speculative, and where spiritual experience gives little support to its conclusions. Faith can only speak of what falls within its own vision, and it only reports of God in so far as he is conceived to enter into and maintain relations with men. The Christian, for example, witnesses to a knowledge in experience of the divine grace, mercy, and love; and these are all conceptions which describe the working of God in regard to man. Religious experience does not pretend to furnish a know-

ledge of God as he is in himself apart from the world and human spirits. Confronted with this claim to a knowledge of God given through inner experience, the agnostic cannot fairly enter the plea that this knowledge is false. For it is on a different level from the scientific knowledge on which he sets store, and it is in no way contradicted by the legitimate conclusions of science. Nor can he consistently say that this knowledge is impossible; for this argues a knowledge on his own part the existence of which he began by denying. Personally he may refuse to make the venture of religious faith, even though he retains faith in himself and his method. In fact the agnostic cannot banish faith from human life, however loath he may be to admit its claims where religion is concerned. For it is too deeply rooted in human nature, too closely linked with the forward outlook of human life. To deny the rights of faith is in the end to deny the spiritual and idealistic view of human life and destiny. The idea of God, faith finds necessary to give meaning and value to the world and human experience. If we are to pronounce the idea of God, which has so profoundly affected human life and history, to be illusory, it must be at the expense of condemning what is highest and best in ourselves.

(b) *Knowledge and Faith.*

The line of argument we have been following depends so much on the validity of faith, that, at the risk of covering ground already trodden, I will add a short statement on the relation of knowledge to faith. Faith appears to occupy a kind of middle position in human life; it is neither purely practical nor purely theoretical, but something of both. The advocates of simplicity who seek to reduce faith to knowledge fail, for faith cannot be absorbed in the theoretical process of knowing without losing its specific character. While the contents of faith are taken to be theoretically true, they are not reached by rational inferences, but are maintained in a practical interest. The

objects of faith are primarily values, values which evoke the affective life, and furnish a centre around which the feelings gather. Faith embraces facts and their relations only in so far as they are involved in the values, and are necessary to support them. In its full spiritual development it is a stable attitude of mind, and a response of the whole personality to the object. In this respect it differs decidedly from mere belief or "opinion" (δόξα) in the sense of Plato.[1] The latter is a judgment prompted by an intellectual or an emotional interest, or by both, but which does not rest on systematic insight. On the level where mind moves constantly within the region of tradition and convention such judgments abound; but they are devoid of the stability of faith, and at the best do not rise higher than a partially grounded conviction. Opinion from the logical standpoint cannot be taken for a final state of mind; it points beyond itself, and forms a transitional stage in a movement to something more complete and satisfying. In practice, however, this flexibility may be lost, and opinion in the average mind often hardens into dogmatic prejudice. Beyond question, opinion in this sense, or belief as we call it, figures largely on all levels of religious experience. Even on the highest level it is frequently found, and expresses itself in the judgments of those for whom religion represents the influence of custom, convention, and education, rather than a personal and inward life. Faith, on the contrary, is an act of the spiritual and self-conscious person, who affirms the religious values, and God the supreme Value, to be essential to his own soul and to the meaning of the world. It is a movement of the self, conscious and free, which expresses the needs and states the postulates of the spiritual life. Faith so conceived is neither partial nor wavering, but speaks of full assurance and an abiding ideal.

Human personality is a unitary whole, and man feels that the object which satisfies the spiritual life should justify itself to the theoretical consciousness. The Good

[1] Cf. Siebeck, *Religionsphilosophie*, pp. 166–168.

he loves and desires must also be the True. Yet we cannot meet this demand after the fashion in which we verify a scientific hypothesis for which truth is claimed; this would mean that faith could be resolved into knowledge and so rendered superfluous. We seem then to be face to face with the dilemma, that faith claims theoretical validity for its object and at the same time implies that the object cannot be theoretically known. It may help us to resolve this difficulty, if we consider how knowledge and faith relate themselves to one another in the expanding process of human experience.

Knowledge and faith are alike movements which develop within the wider whole of life, and are the outcome of the personal and purposive activity of man. Having this much in common, they are otherwise different in their outlook and way of working. Knowledge proceeds by discovering relations between the parts of experience, by establishing the presence of order and connexion in what is given, and so brings about articulation and system in what at first seemed arbitrary and confused. An individual connexion, say of cause and effect, we come to know as an instance of a general principle, and complex details of fact are understood when they are shown to be illustrations of a more general law or uniformity. The process of knowing is therefore a process of eliciting the connexions of things and relating them to one another. Conceptual thinking, which defines these relations, at the same time generalises them, and the individual instance or connexion is treated as the expression of a universal principle. So the scientific mind moves in a world of universal meanings where the rule holds: "once true always true." The ideal of knowledge is rationality, or the insight into the connexion of elements within a systematic whole, in virtue of which we can construe each element through its relation to the other elements and to the whole of which it is a part. Needless to say this ideal remains an ideal, for the human mind only succeeds very partially in establishing connexion and universal meaning

in experience. The work of rationalising ends with unrationalised elements; the individual is not exhausted by the sum of its relations, and the process of assigning causes and conditions concludes with a confession of ignorance. Hence the idea of completeness and system, which inspires knowledge, is not itself realised by knowledge but is held by faith. That the universe is a totality or system which has meaning in every part is more than we can prove, though in the light of what we do know we may have a legitimate faith that it is so.

Knowledge is the outcome of personal activity; but the relation of elements to one another in knowledge wears an impersonal aspect, and appears to the knower to be something independent which he has to accept apart from its personal interest and value to himself. Dispassionate regard for facts is said to be a feature of the scientific mind, and the 'servant and interpreter of nature' must beware of the 'idols of the cave.' In contrast to this is the character of faith. The man of faith apprehends the object, not with the single desire to know, but in order to find satisfaction in it: in other words, interests of feeling and ideas of value are central and decisive. On this account the content of faith stands in a more personal and intimate relation to the self than the content of knowledge. The object of religious faith is the good which corresponds to the needs of the inner life. That good the soul cannot discover among the conditioned things of experience; so it goes beyond the given world and reaches its goal in the transcendent and unconditioned, in the idea of God as supreme Good and supreme End. Faith so conceived is an act of personal freedom and choice, and expresses the ultimate meaning which the personal self finds in experience. Thus faith follows a very different path from knowledge: it seems to attain its goal easily, while the other spells out its way laboriously and stops short on the journey. Nevertheless the one is not really antagonistic to the other. If personal interest is dominant in faith, it also guides the process of knowing. Knowledge

itself is stimulated by faith, and ends with faith in the ideal which has inspired its partial achievement. Faith again, in the interests of spiritual life, goes beyond knowledge in order to find a final value and meaning in the world. In claiming theoretical validity for its object, faith admits its affinity with knowledge. Both movements issue from the living self as it reacts on the experienced world, and are complementary aspects of its purposive activity. What is important to the one cannot in the end be indifferent to the other. Knowledge and faith alike subserve the struggle of the human spirit to its divine goal, and they should interact with one another in the cause of spiritual progress.

CHAPTER IX.

MODES OF RELIGIOUS KNOWLEDGE AND THE PROBLEM OF TRUTH.

The discussions in the previous chapters have now to be supplemented by an examination of certain general characteristics of religious knowing. These are the principles or methods on which the religious subject proceeds, when it apprehends its object and develops a religious view of the world. These methods are certainly not the exclusive property of religion, but, as I have said, they play a characteristic part in religion, and much depends on the validity which attaches to them. For if it should be found that they are inapplicable, or suffer from incurable defects, the religious view of the world, as it is commonly understood, could no longer be maintained. I refer more particularly to the use of analogy, the teleological interpretation of things, and the interpretation of experience in terms of value. All of these methods are employed in the practical activity of the religious spirit, and their validity is presupposed in the claim to truth made for religious ideas. So this question of validity opens out into the wider one of the nature of truth in religion and the mode of testing it.

A.—The Principle of Analogy.

The word *analogy* is loosely employed to denote a similarity. In its logical use it has come to signify the form of argument which, in virtue of a general resemblance in features between two objects, concludes that the co-existence of certain characters in one of them points to a

like coexistence in the other. The Aristotelian logic treats analogical inference as an imperfect induction, or an argument from example. And in its essence analogical reasoning is probable rather than strictly demonstrative. J. S. Mill has pointed out in his *Logic* (Bk. III. chap. xx.), that this type of reasoning always presupposes we do not know the perceived points of resemblance to be connected by general laws with the things which are inferred: if we actually knew this, the inference would cease to be analogical; for it would amount to proof. In current speech, however, the word analogy takes an extended application, and we speak of an analogy between things or provinces of investigation when we mean a similarity. In this wider sense we conceive the principle of analogy to obtain in religious thought; and so conceived the principle is of great scope and significance in the working of the religious consciousness. In general the religious mind proceeds on the assumption that there is a similarity between the human and the divine, so that attributes which are predicated of the one can be predicated of the other. Yet to the critical and reflecting mind this application of the principle appears to be attended by special difficulties and dangers. The cogency of an analogy depends on the degree of probability that the similarity we predicate between objects rests on an identity of principle or a common law. But if we apply the human analogy to the divine nature, we do so in the knowledge that a perfect identity between the two natures is excluded: in the religious relation there must be difference as well as likeness. But, on the other hand, this argument must not be pressed too far, and the use of analogy in religion can be justified. Piety itself postulates a general similarity between man and the object of his faith, and this similarity encourages the belief that specific qualities in man have some counterpart in God.

Let us now consider more in detail how the principle works in the sphere of religion. Through analogy man habitually thinks of his deity. He draws the outline of

his gods after his own image. The qualities he recognises in himself he transfers to the divine object, and thus interprets it in the light of his own self-consciousness.[1] Hence the anthropomorphism which runs through religion is an illustration of the use of analogy: it is a token how persistently man depicts the things in heaven after the pattern of the things on earth. On the lowest levels of religion the employment of analogy is unreflecting, nay almost instinctive. So his animistic consciousness provides the savage with a world of objects possessing a life like his own, and forms a basis for religious development. The spirit world is the dim projection of the human world. At the polytheistic stage the operation of analogy is much more noteworthy: for the gods are here passing into the form of personal beings, and are filling in the outlines of character by the absorption of human qualities. But the predication of human qualities is free and uncritical, and the deities participate in the bad as well as the good qualities of those who worship them. The difference between human and divine qualities is at most one of degree. The gods are stronger and wiser, or more wily and destructive, than mortals: they remain, however, magnified human beings. With the development of monotheism a limit is set to the unrestrained use of analogy. In early monotheism, it is true, the deity still retains traces of the defects of his human traits: the Hebrew tribal god Jahveh, for instance, is capable of repentance after the similitude of a man. The evolution of spiritual culture gradually obliterates these cruder anthropomorphisms, and the deity rises into the region of the transcendent and supremely great. The divine attributes are still conceived on the basis of human qualities, but they are thought to

[1] This truth is set forth in the well-known lines of Goethe:

"Und wir verehren
Die Unsterblichen,
Als wären sie Menschen,
Thäten im Grossen,
Was der Beste im Kleinen
Thut oder möchte."

be present in God in a perfect degree and without admixture of earthly defects. Thus the Christian speaks of God as infinitely wise, just, and good; and his conception of the Father of Spirits is a refined and glorified image of the human relationship. The reflective thought and purified moral perception, which belong to the age of spiritual religion, purge religious faith of its grosser anthropomorphism, and make men careful not to assign attributes to God that are linked with human ignorance and shortcoming. A theology which determines the divine attributes *via eminentiæ* or *via negationis* is at least well aware of the difference between the human and the divine.

The development of critical reflexion has issued in a widespread tendency to call in question the validity of analogies in religion. This was perhaps inevitable; and it is only carrying a stage further the refining process the religious consciousness itself applied to the anthropomorphisms of older religion. From doubting the propriety of some analogies, it is not a long step to deny the fitness of any. Even in the higher polytheism there are indications of this tendency: the Greek Xenophanes, for instance, declared that, if the animals could draw, each would depict its god in its own image.[1] In the modern world the growth of scientific and philosophical thought has made men increasingly critical of conceptions of deity which are obviously anthropomorphic. The difference between the divine and the human is accentuated, and the pronounced anthropomorphism which is still present in popular religion offers an easy target to the shafts of criticism. One recalls how Matthew Arnold, rather more than a generation ago, censured the evangelical creed for what he deemed its anthropomorphic grossness, and

[1] *Vid. Ritter and Preller*, p. 100 (fr. 6). Cp. also his saying (fr. 5): ἀλλ' οἱ βροτοὶ δοκοῦσι γεννᾶσθαι θεοὺς τὴν σφετέρην ἐσθῆτά τ' ἔχειν φωνήν τε δέμας τε. Montaigne (*Apology of Raymond Sebond*) illustrates a like line of thought. "As I think Antiquity imagined it did something for divine Majesty when she compared the same unto man, attiring him with his faculties and enriching him with his strange humours, and most shameful necessities."

suggested in place of the "magnified non-natural man" of popular theology the sublimated idea of "a stream of tendency which makes for righteousness." And even those who are far from finding the secret of spiritual wisdom in this conception may admit that analogies have been used, and are still used, by religious people which will not stand the test of dispassionate reflexion. Criticism must therefore not be banned, and, if it is reverent and fair-minded, it will be helpful rather than harmful.

But it is well to consider carefully where the critical movement is leading, and how far the religious man can follow it without sacrificing his religion on the way. Some at all events who take part in the movement do so, not in order to purify religion, but to discredit it. The analogical method, we are told, is radically unsound, and no mundane image is relevant to God or the Absolute. A divine Mind, if such exists, must be fundamentally different from the human. Any being that corresponds to God lies, it is argued, beyond the limit of our form of thinking, though men readily forget this and bow down before an image of their own creation. So-called knowledge of divine things must give place to nescience. Beyond question, behind much of the scepticism and agnosticism of the present day, there lies the conviction, expressed or unexpressed, that it is radically wrong to conceive of the ultimate Reality after any human analogy. In order to deal with this argument we must consider more closely the function and meaning of the principle of analogy.

The fundamental process in the development of knowledge is the act of judgment. On the basis of this elementary activity the work of generalising and reasoning goes on, and knowledge evolves. The judgment, as we have noted already, is the mental act by which a predicate is referred to a subject, as, for instance, when we qualify the subject man by the predicate mortal. To the movement of judgment difference is essential: to judge, it has been said, is to be conscious of something through the consciousness of something else. The predicate is a significant idea,

and by its reference to the subject the latter acquires meaning. Language, in the form of the proposition, is therefore a kind of symbolism in virtue of which the objects of experience become universally significant for knowing subjects. Apart from the use of sign or symbol of some kind, it would not be possible for human beings to acquire knowledge. The predicates of our judgments, then, are the signs through which we construe our experience, and it is important to remember how they are formed. The process of formation is gradual. Generalised and reflective thinking is relatively late in the order of development, and in the individual and the race thought is at first purely figurative and pictorial. The mind judges through concrete images drawn from the environment, while these acquire a representative function. The associations of the image, with their power to suggest and make vivid, give it value for the purpose of representation; and in the course of use the idea, or meaning associated with the image, becomes all-important and functions independently. But it is not needful to dwell on a matter discussed in an earlier chapter.[1] What has been said may perhaps serve to indicate how we construe one side of experience through another, making what is less known more intelligible by predicates drawn from what is better known. In thinking we lay under contribution different fields of experience, comparing them and helping our minds by the free use of analogies. And so long as the analogies we employ adequately interpret for our purposes the working of the object, we justify their use as predicates. If the knowing process were dependent on the establishment of a strict identity between the predicate as originally forming part of one section of experience, and then conceived as finding application in another, knowledge in the commonly accepted sense would be impossible. The test is not bare identity but *relevancy* which gives satisfactory results; and so tested, analogies can prove relevant. An examination of the phenomena of language shows how deep

[1] Cp. Chapter I. p. 65 ff.

rooted is the instinct in the human mind to interpret things through analogy. We serve ourselves of analogies drawn from the external world to describe our inward processes, and we habitually transfer inward experience to outward objects. The phenomenon of animism, so often referred to in these pages, is a good illustration of the employment of analogy, and common phrases still reveal to a discerning eye the anthropomorphism of early thought. When we say "The sun sinks," or "The river runs," or "The wind rushes," we are really interpreting the processes of nature after the analogy of our own activity. Again, when the scientific man speaks of the 'forces' of nature, or terms society an 'organism,' he is working with a predicate which derives its value from analogy. So far-reaching is the principle, that if you were to say that all man's interpretation of reality after the analogy of his own experience is anthropomorphic, and therefore invalid, then he would be shut out from knowledge altogether. Man cannot escape from himself, he cannot emancipate himself from the conditions of his own experience; and he must find the key to the interpretation of his world within himself, if he is to find it at all.

Our critic will tell us he does not object to every use of analogy, what he finds fault with is its illegitimate use. If there are cases where the method is serviceable, there are also cases where it is inapplicable, and where to employ it is certain to mislead. This is true in regard to religion, and particularly in regard to the conception of God. When the Deity is conceived under the image of a magnified man, he is obviously misconceived and misunderstood.

The argument is plausible, and it is not without force against some religious conceptions. Beyond question we must admit there are limitations and defects in the human personality which can have no counterpart in a supreme and perfect Being. But, admitting this, we are justified in demanding on what grounds we are debarred from any use of analogy when we try to conceive the divine nature. Now the severest critics of the use of the principle of

analogy in religion are those thinkers whose philosophy takes the form of a thoroughgoing monism. God on this view, or what stands for God, must be identified with the sum of reality, or with experience as an inclusive totality. In this instance it is not easy to see how figures and images, drawn from a part of experience, can be transferred to that whole of experience which is never given to us in any experience. If, for example, personality, which is a development within experience, implies limitation and the contrast of the not-self, on what ground can you justify the application of the idea analogically to the Absolute which includes all differences within itself? Certainly there have been thinkers who defended this step and boldly proclaimed their Absolute to be personal; but while the motives which prompted them to this conclusion are intelligible, the soundness of their reasoning is open to dispute. The attitude of Spinoza—and the same may be said of Mr. F. H. Bradley in our own day—is more logical when he frankly declares that intelligence and will, which characterise finite modes, are not predicable of God the Infinite Substance. "The intellect and will which constitute the essential nature of God must differ utterly from our intellect and will, nor can they agree in anything except the name: just as little, in fact, as the celestial Constellation of the Dog is identical with the animal that barks."[1] The validity of monism as a philosophical theory we are not, of course, discussing: but we agree that, if it is valid without qualification, the refusal to interpret the divine nature by means of any human analogy is justified. On the other hand, the case is otherwise with a genuine theism—a theism which makes all reality depend on God, yet does not identify him with the totality of things. The grosser kinds of anthropomorphism have assuredly no place in a spiritual theism; and the divine nature, in its transcendent aspect, must always be differentiated from the human. But the objection to any and every use of analogy in this instance has lost its force. That objection

[1] *Ethica*, Bk. I. xvii. Scholium.

is in point against the application of analogy to an absolute Being who, *ex hypothesi*, transcends the distinguishing and relating movement of human thought. But the theistic conception of the World-Ground is equally removed from pantheism and agnosticism, and to apply an analogy to it is not a *contradictio in adjecto*. For here there is a correspondence between the human and the divine, between personality as it exists in man and personality in God. This correspondence is possible in a Theism which consistently refuses to identity God with the whole. In Christian theism the deliberate acceptance of the principle of analogy is implied in the theological doctrine that 'man is made in the image of God.' And if human nature is at least a partial reflexion of the divine, man may legitimately think of God after the pattern of what is highest and best in himself. Every speculative theory which attributes self-consciousness to God is really founding on the human analogy.

There is a further point to be kept in mind. What is true of the predicate in general is true of an analogy: it does not postulate a strict identity, it only affirms a general agreement or correspondence. Hence it does not follow that human analogies can be applied without qualification to God. When we affirm personality of God, for example, we do not affirm it in exactly the same sense as that in which it applies to men, though the lower form helps us to conceive the higher. Analogy plays a valuable part in suggesting ideas and in aiding our thoughts. Moreover, if the notion of God is to have positive content, and not to be merely determined by negatives, man can only gain the idea of that content through his own personal experience. We are indeed well aware that many ideas and images derived from mundane sources cannot be regarded as logical determinations of the Ground of all experience. But they may be taken as signs and symbols denoting values—values which we postulate must belong to the divine nature, if it is to fulfil our spiritual needs and demands. The theist who speaks of God as a Father in

Heaven is employing an analogy in the way thus described. The ordinary religious mind is content to affirm validity of such conceptions on the strength of their working-value. We have tried to show on broad lines that the use of the analogical method can be justified. Nevertheless this does not settle the problem of the ultimate validity of any particular analogy. To decide this point in any given case will fall to a speculative theory which seeks to determine the ultimate truth of religion, and in the light of this truth evaluates current religious conceptions.

B.—Teleological Interpretation.

The teleological interpretation of things enters into the substance of religious thinking, and it may be regarded as a special and highly important application of the principle we have been discussing. For it is the essence of teleology to construe the facts of the external universe, and the movements of history, after the analogy of that purposive life of which man is conscious in himself. In distinction from mechanical causation, such as obtains between the elements of outer experience, there is a final cause: that for which a thing is done, the end which is contrasted with the process towards it. The outstanding feature of mental life is that it is purposively directed to ends, not mechanically propelled. For it is a movement determined by interest, and interest always converges on a goal. And this direction to ends which characterises the activity of our minds, we imagine obtains in the events of the world around us. We act on a purpose ourselves, and we suppose the working of the universe reveals a purpose. The religious consciousness makes constant use of this notion, and thereby gives meaning to its world. It is less interested in the causal explanation of things than in the source from which they proceed and the end to which they move. The religious man concerns himself with ultimate origins and destinies, and his whole scheme of life is teleologically framed. He believes that he himself has a chief

end to realise, and sees the facts of nature and history charged with purpose. To the spiritual eye, looking out on the wide world, "nothing walks with aimless feet," and the humblest creature has a destiny to fulfil. Hence in the higher religions there is the conception of a comprehensive Providence, which guides the course of nature and history towards a predetermined end. The world and life are conceived to reveal a divine plan, which is being unfolded stage by stage and will at last reach its consummation. In such an order nothing is arbitrary or merely accidental: all things are purposively controlled, and combine together to realise the far-reaching design of God. So the religious mind invests the world with significance and value by conceiving all things as parts of a teleological order which expresses the Divine Will.

However fitting and intelligible this scheme may appear, it has not escaped criticism; and the various criticisms which have been passed upon it will, I think, be found to go back to one fundamental objection. To apply the idea of purpose to the world is, it is said, to make an illegitimate use of a human analogy. In our personal experience we find the notions of means and end most useful, and we habituate ourselves to act in terms of purpose. But this, we are told, is very far from justifying the transference of our idea of purpose to nature. It does not follow that what we find of value for the organisation of our own little lives is likewise essential to the processes of the great world.

Here let me say at the outset, that the hostility of many scientific thinkers to interpretation by final causes is not altogether surprising. The readiness and the recklessness with which the teleological idea was applied by ordinary minds, and often by religious people, were calculated to provoke a reaction against it. The free use of final causes to explain what was obscure was temptingly easy, and this procedure was prejudicial, as Bacon complained, to sound philosophy. Hence the finalist was often the man who made a liberal use of the *ignava ratio* or

lazy argument: when you failed to explain a thing by the ordinary principle of causality, you could 'explain' it by reference to some purpose of nature or of the Creator. This method lent itself with dangerous facility to the well-meant endeavours of the older theologians to expound and emphasise the beneficence of the divine purpose. The order of the solar system, the marvellous adjustments of the human body, the complex organisation of language, and the wonderful variety of animal types, could all be 'explained' through, and made to testify to, the working of Providence. The characteristic of this teleology was its externality: it assumed that the order and harmony of nature was produced by contrivance and by disposition of parts, such as man employs to gain his ends. And when man found that there was a great deal in the natural order of things which worked for his benefit, it only needed the sense of his own importance to make him believe that it had been specially designed for his good. This mode of interpretation could be carried to any length: the moon was fixed in heaven to give us light on winter nights; sheep and oxen were created to nourish our bodies; and the primeval forests were turned into coal to supply us with fuel. There is a touch of truth in the remark of a contemporary thinker: "Man having made the world his prey, says that God made the world to that end."[1]

This crude kind of teleology has now fallen into disrepute, and scientific and philosophical writers do not care to waste time in controverting it. The rise and ultimate dominance of the idea of evolution, which marked the nineteenth century, undermined the presuppositions on which it rested, and showed the material order of things in a new light. Thus the Darwinian theory of Natural Selection and the Survival of the Fittest did away with the older assumption, that organic types were fixed and their origin could not be scientifically explained. Here and elsewhere a new method and point of view took the force out of the older arguments. The study of things in

[1] Carveth Read, *Metaphysics of Nature*, 1905, p. 345.

their development from simpler forms rendered the immediate appeal to final causes superfluous. At the same time there has been a more radical criticism of the notion that nature subserves moral ends. When we look dispassionately on what takes place in nature, we find much of which a former generation of religious apologists were ignorant, or which they were content to ignore. The struggle for existence is severe, and in the process multitudes of the less fit are ruthlessly eliminated. Nature is infinitely wasteful in the production of life, and she brings forth with a severe impartiality the fair and comely and the repulsive and loathsome. She forms the instrument of destruction as readily as the instrument of service: the fang of the cobra or the tooth of the tiger is just as perfect an instrument in its way as the udder of the cow or the hand of the man. Nature is bountiful in producing life, so bountiful that she sends forth swarms of parasites—creatures whose very function is to prey on other forms of life, and which we cannot contemplate without disgust. In face of the facts we may argue that it would be hard for an unprejudiced mind to come to the conclusion, that nature is directly organised to supply a system of means for the well-being of living creatures. Though some things suggest this, other things suggest exactly the opposite. If we are to maintain the validity of teleology in the natural world, it certainly cannot be in the narrow sense of an adjustment of means for the good of sentient creatures.

The breakdown of the old teleology has not made more plausible, however, the theory that the phenomena of life can be explained by the principle of mechanical causality. An organism is no mechanical contrivance, and the need of an immanent end to explain its development is as urgent now as in the time of Aristotle. A finalism of this immanent kind will always figure in philosophic thought, unless, indeed, it can be shown in some convincing way that the notion of end is invalid. But can this be proved? Attempts have certainly been made to do so, and with what success let us now consider. The conception of end

has been attacked on two grounds: in the first place it is contended that a critical examination of the idea discredits its validity, and, in the second place, it is maintained that there is no room for the idea in a monistic philosophy. On the former side the discussion of the question by Kant is probably the most familiar. In Kant's view the notion of end is not a category which the self brings with it to the constitution of experience, but is reached by reflexion upon experience. In contemplating one experience in particular, the phenomenon of life, we find it expedient to go from the whole to the parts of the organism, and to regard the whole as the end of the parts. But this is only a regulative point of view according to Kant—a point of view which helps to order our thoughts; and we have no right to treat the end as an objective principle.[1] Here we have the essence of the critical treatment of the problem, and it consists in asserting the subjectivity of the idea. Reflexion suggests the notion; it often proves convenient and serviceable; but we are not entitled to say it is involved in the structure of reality. In the same spirit it is argued that the conception of end does not really explain anything: we derive the idea from our volitional experience, and apply it when the mechanism of a process escapes us.[2] In other words, the use of the idea does not give a real understanding; in fact its use depends on a defect of insight. The point of the objection from the monistic standpoint is, that the ultimate validity of the conception of end would mean a dualism, and an imperfection in the system of things which cannot really attach to it. The whole is perfect and complete. Spinoza, who identifies the whole of reality with God, says that the doctrine of final cause does away with the perfection of God, and implies that he seeks after something of which he is in need.[3] Similarly, on the assumption that ultimate

[1] It is hard, however, to reconcile this limitation with the use Kant makes of the conception of 'end' in his ethical theory.

[2] *Vid.* Adamson, *Development of Modern Philosophy*, vol. ii. p. 186 ff.

[3] *Eth.*, Pt. I. Appendix.

reality is a timelessly perfect whole, we have been told recently that teleology "in the sense of aiming at the unfulfilled gives an unreal importance to time, and to the part of any whole—it may be a relatively trivial part—which happens to come last in succession."[1]

Of the latter class of objections it is not necessary to say much at this point. They rest on a certain theory of what is ultimately real, and they are only valid if that theory is valid. Thus, if Reality is a timelessly perfect whole, time is not ultimately real, and a purpose which requires time to work out is infected with the same unreality. But the truer method surely is to ask whether an idea justifies itself in experience, rather than to condemn it on the strength of a speculative theory which, at the best, is not certain. Coming back then to the critical point of view, we saw that the substance of its contention was, that the idea of end is subjective merely. The belief that ends rule in the world around us springs from a habit we have of projecting our own experiences into things. What we have now to consider is, whether the facts themselves do not demand a teleological interpretation.

Critics of teleology are usually willing to admit the validity of the causal conception, though they take exception to the validity of final causes. But we ask whether the two ideas can be separated and contrasted in this way. In a former chapter we saw reason to conclude, that causality was not an *a priori* category in the Kantian sense of the term. It is a postulate which the mind is impelled to make in order that experience may become intelligible to it. Scientific knowledge is built up on the postulate—a postulate which justifies itself—that there are constant ways of acting and constant connexions of events in nature. Any such determinate way of acting in a particular sphere

[1] Bosanquet, *Individuality and Value*, 1912, p. 135. Bosanquet's view, I take it, is that teleology has a certain justification within experience, but breaks down when we try to transform it into an ultimate category.

we interpret in the relation of cause and effect, and each causal connexion is an element in a larger whole or system. A bell is struck and gives out a distinct note, and here we say we have cause and effect; but the cause and effect are not really isolated phenomena, they are elements in a group or whole of interrelated principles. In this case the specific causal connexion is only intelligible because it falls within that system of causal connexions which we term the laws of sound. In fact, the relation of cause and effect in each particular instance is determined by the general working of the system of which it is a part. This will illustrate the truth that, even in what seems a purely mechanical causality, there is a reference to a whole which determines the way of working of its elements. This reference of elements to the whole becomes much more explicit when there is that intimate union of parts which is called organic. Here the actings of the parts have no right meaning apart from their function in the system. And especially when we consider the growth of organisms—that process in which living systems pass through a number of typical stages culminating in each case in a specific result—we can hardly do other than conclude, that the completed whole or end somehow governed the elements in the process of interaction which led up to that end. Granted that the analogy of our own mental processes impels us to think of development as a striving towards an end; for all our mental processes are governed by interest, which spells purposive activity. It must also be granted, however, that organic development receives a meaning when interpreted after the analogy of our own conative activity. And, we ask, is the analogy not justified? Are the facts intelligible apart from the postulate of an immanent directive activity controlling the process? "To say that anything sub-human strives to be what it becomes, is only to say that from time to time it becomes what it is."[1] But is

[1] Carveth Read, *op. cit.* p. 341.

not this to ignore the crux of the problem? for the problem is how to explain without a final cause a process which leads always to a characteristic or typical result. The phenomena are indeed inexplicable, if there be no activity, controlling and selecting, immanent in the organism itself. Again, we are told by naturalistic writers not to regard the development of organs in a living body as purposive to the interests of life. A particular organ, mechanically produced, has a certain use, and we come to imagine it was produced with a view to that use. The eye was not developed in order that the animal might see, but because it was developed the creature saw. This theory needs only to be carried out consistently to lead to absurd results.[1] Let us suppose for a moment that the eye was not developed with a view to sight. In his recent book on "Creative Evolution," Bergson has pointed out the similarity in the structure of the eye in animals so far apart as the molluscs and the vertebrates, and he asks how this similarity can be explained as an accidental variation.[2] What likelihood is there that two very different types of organism, by some mechanical correspondence, produced an organ similar in structure and function, if in neither case the end had anything to do in determining the process? To turn to a final cause in such a case is not to abandon explanation and yield to the 'lazy argument.' We are driven to do so because every mechanical explanation is hopeless. In fact, those who try to banish ends from nature generally reintroduce them under another name. The impossibility of entirely dispensing with ends in the organic world is evident in the Darwinian theory of Natural Selection. Natural selection, as a mechanical process, is a mere process of elimination which does not

[1] This is excellently shown by Paulsen, *Einleitung in die Philosophie*, 1899, p. 232. The ox does not have a horn in order to thrust, but because he has a horn he thrusts; he does not thrust to knock down his opponent, but because he thrusts his opponent falls!

[2] *L'Évolution Créatrice*, p. 70.

explain evolution. If the theory is to work you must suppose living forms strive to develop themselves, and use the opportunities of the struggle for existence to promote organic *ends*. When you term 'variations' successful, it means that they are used in the interests of progress; and progress implies a teleological standpoint. The character of life accounts for evolution in organisms, and not the facts and changes of their environment. And finalism appears to be involved in the intrinsic nature of the life-process: the self-conserving impulse which runs through all grades of living beings is meaningless if it is not purposive. The processes of secretion and nutrition, the adaptation of organs implied in reproduction, the power to heal injured organs, and in some cases to renew lost parts, are only intelligible on the assumption of a directive activity immanent in life itself. It is not without significance that an eminent biologist gives to this activity the name *entelechy*, and assigns to it a regulative function.[1]

But if the facts and processes of the organic world can only be understood on the acceptance of the teleological principle, we have to consider what this implies. The organic world passes by insensible degrees into what we call the inorganic world. Between the two worlds a constant interaction goes on, and elements from the lower world are continually being absorbed by living beings and made to function as constituents in their life. Such a process presupposes adaptation and sympathy; and elements which play a part in a teleological system must themselves be teleologically determined. What in its own nature is purely mechanical could not become the medium in which an immanent end works itself out. No doubt a mechanism, say a watch, can show an end externally impressed upon it. But when the end is immanent, as in an organism, elements which are simply

[1] Driesch, *Science and Philosophy of the Organism*, vol. ii. p. 191. He holds that 'entelechy' controls the development of the organism by suspending or setting free existing potentials.

related mechanically could not be permeated by the end. The continuity of life thus calls for an extension of the purposive process from the human, through the animal, into the material world. The natural order which is responsive to the purposive movement of human thought, and the material elements which become the means to organic process, alike must fall under the dominion of the realm of ends. This, of course, involves some revision of the ordinary idea of what the material world itself means. And, in particular, it requires us to suppose that the mechanical point of view is merely a provisional one, and finds its completion and explanation in a teleological order. Mechanism, in other words, is an abstract point of view, convenient for specific purposes, no doubt, and especially useful at those levels of existence where spontaneity seems to have vanished. Yet when we think out the implications of a mechanical order so called, we find ourselves compelled to correct our original assumptions, to recognise the elements are not really external to one another, but fall within a teleological system. The printed page for certain purposes may be regarded as the outcome of a mechanical process: it can only be *understood* as the expression of purposive thought.

What, it may be asked, is the religious significance of the teleological theory we have been trying to maintain? Does the notion of ends immanent in nature and life harmonise with the idea of the working out of a divine purpose? Is there truth in the old conception of a providential government of the world? It is plain that the teleological theory just outlined does not lend support to the idea of an external designer, who arranges and disposes things so that they become the instruments of his purpose. But it is consistent with the idea of a divine end working from within, and fulfilling itself in and through the order of nature. There is nothing in a teleological order so conceived which is in conflict with the hypothesis, that the elements of existence from

which the development proceeds are sustained and informed by the Divine Will, so that in their interaction and evolution they conspire to realise the divine purpose. We may go further and say, that only a Supreme End upon which all causal actings converge can make the world and life a coherent and significant whole. That experience does disclose such an immanent divine purpose is, of course, more than the present discussion pretends to prove. Metaphysical problems must be faced ere such a conclusion could be reached. But it is at least important to know that criticism justifies the validity of teleology, and this in a sense which leaves room for the operation of divine purpose.

C.—Values and their Rationality.

The conception of end is closely related to that of value, though the one is not exactly identical with the other. Ends and values alike rest upon, and psychologically develop out of, man's conscious activity, and the two ideas imply one another. Conative activity is always a striving towards some result, and the satisfaction in, or the enjoyment of, the result constitutes a value-feeling. These elementary feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction are the rudimentary facts which make spiritual development possible. A feeling of value marks the fact that conscious will has gained a content more harmonious and satisfying than what has gone before. Value-feelings in this way become objects of desire, and the goal towards which the conative process is directed. Values which thus become the object of value-judgments are defined by the reflecting consciousness as ends or objects of endeavour. In this manner the concept of end is reached psychologically through the concept of value. Between the two ideas there is this distinction: when we think of value we think of satisfaction in the result of a process; when we think of end we think of the process itself moving to its goal. The end gives stimulus and direction to endeavour, while

value denotes endeavour satisfactorily completed. The bare notion of activity does not yield the conception of value; but activity is expressed in terms of feeling, and differences of feeling are the conditions of the elementary values. Psychological analysis suggests, I venture to think, the line of advance is from activity, through interest, to ideas of value and to the notion of end. The interest which sustains and stimulates a psychical process makes the activity involved explicit to consciousness;[1] it also differentiates and retains in memory the feelings of satisfaction and dissatisfaction, as well as the degrees of pleasure-tone, which accompany activity. Interest working in this fashion defines the values to which activity leads; and in the absence of interest a psychical process could not have those differences of feeling which are the origin of distinctions of value. A deliberate purposive life on man's part is made possible by his perception of values, since the recognition of values which are objects of desire leads directly to their definition as ends to the will. But the notion of end, though it is reached later in the order of psychological development, is prior in the nature of things to the idea of value. For the values which man realises do not depend merely on his psychical constitution: they presuppose a pre-existing teleological adaptation or harmony between the psychical nature and the reality which is qualified as a good when it enters consciousness. If it be said that values are only real in a personal consciousness, we agree; but we reply, it is impossible the whole wealth of values can be evolved from the constitution of the subject. Like all other experiences, values depend on the interaction of subjective and objective factors: values imply facts which through relation to the self can become values; and facts and values are teleologically related.

The far-reaching importance of value-ideas and value-judgments in the ethical and religious organisation of life

[1] Cp. on this point, Lipps, *Vom Fühlen, Wollen, und Denken*, 1902, pp. 232–233.

has already appeared in our previous discussions. Reflective thinking, working on experienced values, seeks in the interests of life to introduce order and coherency into them, and in this way develops a system of values. The problem how to decide between competing values could only be solved by the acceptance of a standard of value; and a consistent standard of value could not be secured unless a central or supreme value was presupposed. The possession of an ideal value as a standard made it possible to organise the values of life in a graduated system, where the lower stood to the higher in the relation of means to end. The movement which brought the idea of God into living relation with the concept of value was of the highest significance. In particular, the ethical values, as they gradually took form in the historic life, served to purify and elevate the idea of God, the religious relation, and the religious life. The organic union of the ethical and the religious consciousness was achieved by spiritual religion, which identifies God with the perfect Good in relation to which all other goods receive their place and meaning. This development of an ultimate and fundamental value is neither a purely logical deduction nor is it an inference from empirical facts. It is a process psychological and historic, which works itself out in response to the pressure of personal and social needs: there lies behind it the insistent desire on man's part for an ideal or chief Good which will harmonise and complete the values of experience. The ideal slowly reveals itself to human eyes amid the oppositions and conflicts between different ideas of value struggling for supremacy. The appeal of the ideal is to the spirit, and the mind or spirit is the moving power which impels man to find the solution of contending ideas of value in a higher and purer conception of good. The change and growth of value-ideas are nowhere more clearly expressed than in the qualities of the beings or Being whom man makes the object of his reverence and trust. There, as it were in a mirror, we behold the reflexion of the advancing ideal of human good.

It is plain the religious object and the religious relation depend for their content on the value-ideas. But here again we meet the old objection. Values, it is argued, denote a purely human point of view: they represent phases of feeling which fluctuate and alter, and are not valid truths of reason. In answer we must show that values are more than subjective feelings which change and pass, that in some sense they can claim objectivity and rationality. In what sense, then, are values rational? Now some idealistic thinkers try to make the idea of value coalesce with the rational or real; but in so doing they are not, I think, just to the volitional and feeling aspects of value. We are informed, for example, that objects possess as much of value as they possess of reality and trueness. We reply that, if it were possible to judge from the standpoint of absolute knowledge, it might be so; but we cannot do this, and the historic values must be understood psychologically rather than metaphysically. Again, while it is true that thought can modify our feelings of value, it does not seem to be the case that value as satisfaction depends on the *logical stability* of the objects of desire.[1] For the centre of value lies in the subject, and in the way it reacts on the object, rather than in the character of the object. The essence of value, that is to say, lies in the experient subject, and we cannot transfer it to a system which somehow transcends the subject.

But though we do not think the problem can be solved on these lines, there is an element of truth in the view we have been criticising. For values cannot be fundamentally irrational, if they are to maintain them-

[1] *Vid.* Bosanquet, *op. cit.* p. 293 ff. Prof. Bosanquet seeks to reduce value to rationality by arguing skilfully that value depends on conditions which transcend the experient subject, that these conditions can only be fulfilled in a systematic whole, and ultimately in the universe as a concrete universal or individual totality. There is this amount of truth in his theory: the whole content of values cannot, as we have already argued, be derived from the nature of valuing subjects. But such types of philosophy can never show us how to pass from metaphysical value, as *perfection of structure*, to the values of the historic life.

selves as values. Nevertheless it profits little to say values are in some sense rational, unless you make it more clear what you mean by rationality in this connexion.[1] Speaking generally, to be reasonable, I take it, means that the elements of experience cohere with and imply one another, so that we recognise the way in which one element is connected with others, and how all unite to form a systematic whole. Rationality, in other words, signifies systematic insight. We have already agreed that rationality so conceived is an ideal never completely realised, though the process of rationalising may be carried further in one field than in another. Now when we examine the values of experience, we soon become aware that they cannot be interpreted and understood as though they were simply a part of the realm of scientific facts. The ethical and religious values, it is true, develop within a world of facts, and these facts in turn can assume the character of values for subjects which experience them. But we can neither demonstrate the identity of facts and values, nor can we establish a definite causal relation between them. The two ideas will not coalesce, nor will the one explain the other. Again, if we confine ourselves to the realm of values, we may try to understand them in their connexions with one another; but this understanding never amounts to a rational comprehension. In other words, it is not possible for us to attain that degree of insight which would enable us to deduce one value from another, or to show why a given value-feeling should have the precise character it has. Values can only be known through being experienced, and that experience involves volitional and feeling factors which are not reducible to rational relations. Hence the values of life are found and

[1] Prof. Ladd appears to be guilty of this kind of vagueness when he speaks of the rationality of values; and the relation of the two conceptions demands a closer examination than he has given to it. In one place he remarks: "Using the words in an admittedly loose but, as we believe, defensible meaning, it may be said that rationality is the ultimate test of the values of religion," *Philosophy of Religion*, vol. ii. p. 80.

enjoyed by us rather than rationally apprehended; and though thought is active in the formation of judgments of value, it does not play an exclusive part.

Yet thought undoubtedly has a function in the development of value-ideas, and they forget this who say that values are altogether non-rational. In abstraction from thinking, value-feelings would remain isolated and fleeting experiences, and could not enter into the formation of ethical character. The process by which feelings of value are made explicit and receive a fixed and general form in judgments of value, also by which the latter in turn are co-ordinated in a system of values, is a process made possible by the fact that man is a thinking being. In short, though thought does not constitute our value-experiences, it operates on these experiences and gives them a form fitted to the life of a rational person. The graduation of values and their organisation depend on man's rational activity, and are its expression: and in this sense the insight which enables man to systematise his conduct by making lesser values instrumental to a supreme value may be termed a rational insight.[1] But it should be noted that the connexion of values developed in this way is practical and teleological, and is not equivalent to a rational explanation. Though reason co-operates in the realisation of values, it does not rationalise them in the sense of establishing an identity between itself and them.

It may be said that even on the foregoing statement, the rationality of values is sacrificed, and their claim to universality and objectivity is surrendered. If this criticism is valid, the use of value-ideas by the religious consciousness would no longer be justified. Now in answer to this objection, we ask the reader to remember in the first place, that, if complete rationality is to be the test of objectivity, the test is one which cannot be passed anywhere. For perfect rationality is an ideal never fully realised. On the other hand, though reason and value

[1] For some suggestive remarks on the rationality of ethical valuation, *vid.* Höffding's *Philosophische Probleme*, p. 90 ff.

cannot be made to coalesce by us, it is a mistake to say they are dualistically opposed; on the contrary, they display adaptation to one another, and both co-operate in the interests of life. They work in concord within the purposive life of man and combine to subserve spiritual ends. In fulfilment of their teleological office they develop norms or standards: in the one case norms of truth, in the other norms of value. Between rationality and value there is a difference, never a separation: value has its rational aspect and reason its value-aspect. The ideal of reason is coherent thinking, and the ideal of value is harmonious living; but in neither case is the ideal purely theoretical or purely practical. To set the theoretical activity in opposition to the practical, and assign to the former a validity which the latter does not share, is in effect to make a separation which does not exist in experience. And if we consider on what grounds we claim objectivity for reason, we shall find they correspond closely to those on which we claim objectivity for value. The demand that the principles of reason shall hold in the real world cannot be turned into a demonstration that they actually do so: the demand is a postulate of thought which justifies itself by its results. That our ideals of value shall rule in the experienced world is likewise a postulate which approves itself by its working. Both postulates proceed from the purposive life of man: they are demands of the will. Man must rationalise as well as valuate in the fulfilment of his vocation; and rationality and value are alike necessary to give meaning to life. Instead of being sharply opposed they harmoniously unite to realise the idea of the Good. When man seeks to conceive that Ultimate Ground of things on which the teleological structure of the universe depends, he is justified in interpreting it through those ideas which have proved essential to the significance and worth of experience. In so doing he carries out the teleological method to its final postulate, the postulate which ensures the unity and validity of all truths and values. God is the final

presupposition of all that is true and good, and the assurance of their final harmony.

D.—The Idea of Truth in Religion.

We have now reached a stage when we may ask a further question, and it is an important one: What do we mean when we say a religious belief or doctrine is true? We are really here only putting in a more general form the problem which lay behind our discussion of the validity of analogies, ends, and values. The standpoint from which we shall treat this question will be epistemological rather than metaphysical. In other words, we are not to deal now with the problem of the ultimate reality of religion, but we are going to inquire on what grounds we adjudicate on the claim to truth made in behalf of religious beliefs. Of course an inquiry of this sort runs into the larger question of the nature of truth in general, for religious truths cannot form a class by themselves. To some extent, therefore, we may have to touch on current controversies about the nature of truth, but we will keep in view throughout the religious bearing of the subject.

Truth is one of those very common words which we use daily and assume we understand perfectly; and yet the conception of truth under close scrutiny becomes difficult and baffling. We find, after reflexion and criticism, that assumptions we are all in the habit of making fail to justify themselves. It is easy, for instance, to say that truth is 'conformity to facts.' But it very soon appears that facts are not the simple and palpable things the naïve person takes them to be. The legal mind, at least, is well aware how easy it is to confound 'facts' with inferences, and how readily we see what we desire to see. At the same time the common idea that truth is 'correspondence with facts' is often quite sufficient for certain purposes. For instance, a report is designated true when it accurately describes what took place, or a photograph because it accurately

reproduces the lineaments of the object. Now, can we apply this idea of correspondence to religious truth? We have already noted how the religious consciousness claims reality for its conceptions: the religious man thinks God *is* what he thinks him to be. We must neither ignore nor minimise this claim, if we are to be just to the facts of spiritual experience. But how are we to interpret this feeling of reality? We fully admit the religious spirit cannot maintain itself if it harbours the doubt that this reality-feeling may be purely illusory. On the other hand, can we believe our religious ideas are in some way copies of reality? Can we suppose the religious subject draws an accurate copy of the divine object, and reproduces its characteristics in detail? If the answer be in the affirmative, it would mean that religious truth is reduced to correct portraiture. But this conception of a correspondence of our ideas with a transcendent Being is a very difficult one to carry out; and it is not apparent how correspondence in this instance could become an effective test of truth. For it is futile in this case to appeal to an independent reality by reference to which we might test the correctness of our notions. The idea of God is developed in the medium of religious experience, and we can have no direct knowledge of Deity as he is in himself. God is for man what he experiences him to be, and man cannot go outside these changing experiences and set up a standard of spiritual truth which is independent of his own mind. And if a reality lies beyond our mind, we cannot know whether our ideas 'correspond' with it or not. In discussing the validity of our ideas in general, we came to conclude that the essential point was not correspondence with a transsubjective reality, but adequate *interpretation* of it; and the same holds good of religious ideas. The notion of adequacy is wider and more flexible than that of correspondence, and is free of the implication of the reproduction of details. A religious idea which was adequate would be one which set man in satisfactory relations with the object, and that both in regard to

thought and practice. In the degree that religious ideas were adequate they would be true. Of course we can as little test adequacy by reference to an independent reality as we can correspondence; for we cannot reach such a reality to decide whether our idea of it is adequate or not. But, though comparison of our conceptions with the transcendent Reality is not possible, there is still the test which is afforded by the working of these conceptions within experience. More particularly we can try to verify religious ideas by showing that they enter into harmonious relations with the other elements in the body of knowledge. They then share in the strength of a structure the parts of which mutually support one another. Failure to cohere, when it amounts to positive inconsistency, is a sign of error; and in the development of religion we find that religious doctrines are condemned as untrue when they contradict the body of assured knowledge. Thus monotheism justifies itself by the way in which it enters into harmonious relations with our scientific understanding of the unity of the world, while polytheism is condemned by its inconsistency with knowledge. Coherency with the system of knowledge thus furnishes a means by which the adequacy of some religious ideas may be tested.

We say some, because every religious doctrine cannot be verified by this method. The ideas, for example, which are involved in the deeper and more spiritual religious experiences cannot be brought into close relations with the body of scientific knowledge, and our theoretical reason cannot yield a positive criterion of their truth. Take for an illustration the doctrine of a divine grace given to the Christian, in virtue of which he is able to overcome temptation and to continue steadfast in well-doing. This conception of divine strength 'made perfect' in human weakness, can neither be proved nor disproved by theoretical knowledge. At most we can say it is not inconsistent with the actual body of knowledge: science leaves room for it, though it cannot confirm it. In this

dilemma we are thrown back on the nature and working of the experience itself, if we are to justify the claim to truth made on its behalf. Is there something in the experience itself or its results which serves to verify it? Now there are some who will plead that in and with the experience there is given to them an immediate certainty of its truth; and personal testimony of this kind, simply and sincerely given, is impressive. But, on the other hand, more is here than pure experience; there is interpretation and there is inference. And where an experience involves these, the possibility of error is present. When all is said there attaches to such a judgment as "Divine Grace enabled me to overcome that temptation" an element of subjectivity; and though personal conviction may be strong, we cannot make this individual feeling of certainty a sufficient witness to a universal truth. Under these circumstances the dynamic, or the pragmatic, test of truth will be found valuable; and it is applicable here where verification through coherency with the system of knowledge fails us, and where the immediate judgment of self-consciousness is insufficient. We ask then, what is the practical value of the belief which claims to be true? Does it work well in experience and lead to satisfactory results? If the faith in question has, under various conditions, steadily borne good fruit, that is to say has proved itself a dynamic value, there is a strong *prima facie* case for taking it to be true, though, of course, the cogency of theoretical proof is absent. But while in certain cases the pragmatic criterion of truth is applicable, and perhaps the only one available, it is certainly not the sole criterion. None the less it is sometimes valuable, and especially so in religion where the deeper spiritual experiences are concerned. "By their fruits ye shall know them." A faith which enables religious men to overcome the evil, and victoriously to bear the burden and heat of life's day, is in process of verifying itself.

Those critically disposed may object, that the principle

of working-value is not the plain and simple thing which, at first blush, it appears to be.[1] For principles work differently in different persons and in different societies and times, and what approves itself a practical value to one man may not do so to another. In reply it must be pointed out,—and here I may be allowed to repeat what was said previously—we are by no means shut up to the conclusion that what approves itself practically valuable to the individual is thereby true. No more in religion than in science can truths be purely individual judgments. The religious values, we have frequently urged, are not individual creations, but grow out of the historic life; and we may very properly extend the notion of practical value to the way a spiritual idea or principle works and has worked in the course of historic development. Such historic testimony has a weight which no individual witness can claim. Principles or doctrines which have won their way, and established themselves in the wide field of history, come down to us with good credentials, and religious people are fully justified in laying the stress they do on this form of argument. For that which works continuously for good must be in harmony with the nature of man and of the world in which he is placed. So beliefs can only grow into spiritual convictions through being tested and acted on in life. The act of assent to a religious doctrine does not in itself mean much; but when its practical value has been fully proved it enters into the living substance of faith. Hence the Christian principle, that by 'doing the will of God' men come to know the 'truth of the doctrine.'

We conclude, then, that the criterion of working-value can sometimes be taken as a criterion of religious truth, and there are instances where it is the best available. But in the nature of the case its cogency will always be less than that of logical proof. As a matter of logical form we cannot pass from "All that is true works" to "All that

[1] Cp. with what follows the previous remarks on validity and working-value, pp. 260–262.

works is true"; and as a matter of actual experience we find that some religious beliefs, which seemed to work well during certain periods and in particular social systems, have not in other times and circumstances been productive of good. The difficulty in the case of a test of this kind is to make it searching and exhaustive, so that it could be taken for final. From a logical point of view the negative side of the principle is quite defensible; for if all truth works, then what does not work cannot be true. But the intricacies of experience escape the clear-cut forms of logic. History does not usually record plain cases either of success or failure in the working of a belief: we more often find partial success, or success here and failure there. To overcome this difficulty it would be fatal to put forward the theory, that so long as a religious idea works it is true, when it ceases to work it becomes untrue, and if at some future time it again begins to work it once more becomes true. For to truth must belong the note of universality and constancy: and we sacrifice its character if we say the individual man is the measure, and so long as he finds an idea serviceable it is true for him. It follows, therefore, that only beliefs which prove themselves working-values in a sustained and continuous fashion can lay plausible claim to truth. Moreover, while the evidence of practical value can give good ground for personal conviction, it does not strictly establish theoretical universality and necessity. At the best the conception of working-value is provisional, and points beyond itself for its explanation. A principle does not work on some authority of its own, nor can a human will, however strenuous, make any idea in which it believes work. Facts, we have found, are not identical with values, and a value in any form is ultimately dependent on those elements of reality within which it operates.[1]

[1] It is just on the implications of the term *working* that Pragmatism is least convincing. The pragmatist apparently would not commit himself to the proposition that everything which works is true. Yet it is not clear what further test he would apply in order to decide truth-claims, for he finds neither 'correspondence' nor 'coherency' satisfactory as a criterion.

The realm of values is made possible through the interaction of valuing subjects with the system of existences within which they live and feel and act; and a principle that works must depend on the harmony of the factors, subjective and objective, which are involved. Hence an examination of the notion of working brings us back to the principle that an idea is valid when it adequately interprets the object in its relation to the subject; and an idea thus adequate is true, and therefore valuable. The mere 'will to believe' cannot make a notion true, unless the notion in some way satisfactorily interprets the real and so brings us into satisfying relations with it. The natural tendency of human judgment is to outrun the data which it seeks to construe; and here lies the possibility of error: the fact that a judgment works badly is a token it does not interpret rightly, and therefore contains error.

Now truth in the sense of adequate interpretation is sometimes capable of a sufficiently easy verification. This is the case in the region of sense-perception. I judge a tree in the distance to be an oak, but on closer approach it turns out to be an elm: here the means of verification are at my disposal by which I can test my first inference. But the judgments of the religious consciousness, we have seen, are not to be established or rectified in this simple and convincing way. The savage who pronounces a tree to be inhabited by a spirit which can help or harm him cannot be disillusioned by an appeal to the senses, and the same is true of the ancient citizen who believed in the reality and efficiency of the gods of the state. In the

But it seems to me in the conception of 'working' there is implied in some form a harmony or coherence between the idea and the environment in which it operates. On the other hand, pragmatists like the late Prof. James and Dr. Schiller have done excellent service by challenging traditional views about truth. They have justly insisted on the purposive aspect of thought, the necessity of taking the problem of truth along with that of error, and the futility of a transcendent and impersonal standard of truth. Mr. Joachim, in his book on *The Nature of Truth*, has the merit of showing, by his own admitted failure to solve the problem, that in a purely monistic philosophy the conception of truth cannot be thought out consistently.

domain of religious belief there is no short and sure way of convincing men of error, and the religious person has a great capacity of explaining away results which appear unfavourable to a belief he is disposed to cherish. In fact, as we have already suggested, religious ideas are only gradually felt to be inadequate. Ancient beliefs fade slowly, and they are finally judged to be untrue, because views of life and conceptions of the world have developed with which they will not harmonise. The old gods pass because they belong to an order of things which man has transcended, and their forms can no longer find a place in the enlarged structure of knowledge. This idea of coherency, in the wide sense of consistency with theoretical and practical knowledge, becomes then an ampler test of the adequacy of religious ideas for which truth is claimed. When the evidence of inconsistency with reason, of conflict with the assured results of rational thought, is clear, there are the strongest grounds for rejecting a belief, even though it has proved useful in its day. The appearance of an incoherence of this kind is a challenge to thought, it is a call to think out the implications of a doctrine in relation to the body of knowledge, in order to determine if possible its validity. Nor can universality and objectivity be firmly established apart from the support of the theoretical consciousness. When reason is altogether silent, there may be personal conviction on which the individual is fully prepared to act and is justified in being so, but there cannot be necessity of belief.

Let us try to gather together the scattered threads of the argument, and state our general conclusions. Truth is always a form of satisfaction, and in religion it implies the satisfaction of man's rational and practical nature. Spiritual or religious satisfaction which means truth, means also that man is in harmony with God, the world, and other men, so that his spiritual nature is in harmony with itself. Hence the solidarity of religious truths, for they all lead up to and find their consummation in a supreme truth. Just as the realm of ends finds its goal in an ultimate end,

so the spiritual truths, which mark the way to the end, reach their completion in an ultimate truth. But the unity of truth is only partially realised by us, and there is no single test by which we can determine the validity of every judgment which claims to be true. Nor will this surprise those who remember that the nature of man is a concrete whole which includes thinking, feeling, and willing. In the degree that a religious doctrine satisfies thought, and ministers to the practical and inner life of man, is its validity assured. In other words, if truth is what satisfies the whole man, a religious doctrine which claims to be true can best substantiate its claim by approving itself both a theoretical and a practical value. Beyond question there are religious doctrines, which have grown out of a genuine spiritual experience, that cannot be validated by the theoretical consciousness. Yet in such cases the claim of reason will receive acknowledgment, and religious faith will be strengthened, if it can be shown that these doctrines do not involve propositions which are in any way inconsistent with the accepted results of theoretical knowledge. In particular, the religious philosopher will be very slow to admit the claim of religious emotion and sentiment to decide a matter of religious truth. With the ordinary mind the witness of feeling counts for much, and certainty tends to be measured by the intensity of emotional conviction. Confronted with hostile evidences which he cannot refute, the devotee will still cling to his belief, because he 'feels it to be true.' But the unreliability of this testimony, if it stands alone, is transparent; and to take it for sufficient would be tantamount to abandoning any objective standard of truth in religion. For doctrines quite inconsistent with one another and with scientific knowledge have at one time or another been vouched for in this fashion. Feeling-values fluctuate, and they cannot give the stability we demand for the conception of truth.

A wider and more reliable test of the validity of religious ideas is found where the witness of the feelings is supplemented and confirmed by the working of the

will. The doctrine in this case is acted on, and so brought into intimate relation with the world in which man plays a part. When an idea leads to satisfactory results both in the individual life and the social medium, this dynamic efficiency constitutes a proper claim to truth. And the claim gathers weight when it gains support over a wide range of space and time. That theism as a religious belief produces better spiritual and practical results than polytheism and pantheism, is good evidence in its favour. On the other hand, we have given reasons for holding that even the test of working-value is not in practice final and complete. Ideas which have done good service at one stage of development often require to be revised and restated in the light of fuller knowledge. Hence some further test is desirable. In the evolution of the individual, feeling and will are crowned and completed by thought; and thought, which ever seeks connexion and system in experience, plays an important part in verifying claims and establishing truth. Religious belief and doctrines have a cognitive aspect, and, in virtue of this, thought has the right to examine them and to test, so far as that is possible, their consistency with the articulated whole of knowledge. Where applicable, reason is the most adequate criterion: feeling is individual; working value has a social and historic aspect; but thought is universal. And reflective thinking alone makes it possible to connect and compare the religious experience with experience as a whole. Only by rational thought can we take the ideas through which the religious mind interprets its experience, and make proof of their coherency with scientific and speculative doctrines. Philosophical conceptions change, and we admit they are not an infallible guide to the acceptance or rejection of religious ideas. But they represent the toil of the human spirit in its endeavour to understand the world; and if they must be tested by religious experience, religious beliefs must likewise be tested by them. Coherency between all the elements of our experienced world is the most complete

criterion of truth. In reality, however, the religious philosopher has to be content with less than complete coherency; and it is essential he should try to show that the theoretical and the practical consciousness supplement and confirm one another. The task of explaining the meaning and of determining the truth of religious experience, as an aspect of the whole of experience, is the final task of a Philosophy of Religion. In proceeding to deal with this problem we enter the region of Ontology: we face the question of the ultimate nature and meaning of religion.

PART III.

THE ULTIMATE TRUTH OF RELIGION (ONTOLOGICAL).

CHAPTER X.

A SPECULATIVE THEORY OF RELIGION: ITS DATA AND AIM.

A.—The Data and the Problem they Raise.

Before we turn to a new aspect of our problem, let us look back for a moment on the path we have already traversed. So far we have said nothing about what may be called the Metaphysics of Religion. We have regarded religion as a historic fact, tried to describe its psychical features, indicated its value in the complex life of culture, and considered its essential nature revealed in the course of development. Description, arrangement of materials, and psychological explanation do not carry us beyond the phenomenological sphere: they do not determine the validity of religious beliefs, and the question of their truth is pressed upon us. Preliminary to this question it was necessary to say something on the character of human knowledge, and the principles and methods which it involved. For scepticism on the validity of knowledge must react injuriously upon religion, which makes a claim to know. In this connexion it seemed very desirable to examine the modes of religious knowledge in order to make clear, if possible, the degree of validity which attached to them. The outcome of this inquiry went to confirm our belief in the validity of knowledge; and it

also served to show that the modes of religious knowledge could be justified, because they were capable of conveying truth, though not in a perfect or scientific form. At the beginning of our course, and looking ahead, we described in a general way the problem and method which a Philosophy of Religion should follow in dealing with the abundant materials and the different disciplines of which it must take cognisance. But, at the stage we have now reached, the religious problem assumes a definite and an urgent form which raises a fundamental issue. The general assurance of the validity of knowledge, though most important, does not carry us far enough, and the question of the truth of religious ideas has to be faced. It is not surprising that beliefs which are so largely influenced by emotional needs and practical motives should have their theoretical value doubted; and this doubt must be frankly met and, if possible, dispelled.

The specific nature of the task which lies before us ought to be noted. Our previous discussion did not lead us to claim more than that man, in the religious as well as the scientific sphere, was *able* to apprehend what was real. He was not shut out from truth by any inherent defect in the organ of knowledge. This, of course, could not guarantee that what was possible was always realised; and there may be error and illusion in religious matters as well as in secular things. What we have done is to justify our position against the assaults of agnosticism and scepticism at the outset; what we have now to do is to consider whether those specific ideas which are put forward by the religious spirit, in the belief that they are essential to its life, can be shown to be true. It is not enough to say that multitudes have believed in them and their value has been proved. We cannot dismiss the suggestion as intrinsically absurd, that mankind, though not condemned to illusion, has in point of fact fallen a victim to continuous illusions in the field of religion.

The demand for some pronouncement on the reality to which religious experience refers is a demand which

reflective minds make and cannot help making. The sincerely religious person will not, indeed, put forward such a demand on his own behalf: reasoning did not make him religious, and the inward assurance suffices for him. But this subjective conviction on the part of the individual is not a guarantee for others; and since religion is essentially a social phenomenon, the need for some rational justification is felt. This want cannot be met in the fashion which finds favour in some quarters at the present day—by the endeavour, namely, to exhibit the function and value of religion in the individual and social life. However interesting and useful such an exposition may be, it stops short of the critical point: it leaves the ontological question in abeyance. At the last the reader is left with the unsatisfactory impression, that the social and personal value of religion does not depend on the degree of truth contained in it, that in religion, as in science, there are such things as useful fictions. Now in the interests of religion it is desirable that the situation should be cleared up by a frank discussion of the problem of truth. No doubt neither the religious individual nor the religious society is likely to take seriously the possibility that its religious experience is purely illusory. As in the case of the external world, so in that of the religious object, the suggestion that it is a fiction of the experient subject is straightway rejected by most people. But though the mind recoils from a scepticism so subversive, simply to say that the object of the religious consciousness is real, does not carry us very far. More is wanted than a mere affirmation of this sort; and when once the reflective spirit has been aroused and is at work, it inevitably presses the further query: What then is the object? To say in a general way *that* God is means very little, unless we know *what* you mean by the word God: the term may have the highest spiritual significance or it may have none at all. It may signify the Universe as a whole, or it may denote a personal Being who thinks and loves. In religious experience the difficulty—a

difficulty which prompts an appeal to reason in the interests of faith—has always been the varying ways in which the religious object has been represented. At first sight the religious beliefs of mankind resemble a dense and pathless jungle rather than a field well laid out and harmoniously ordered. And though 'the eye by long use' comes to detect the outlines of order in what at the outset seemed a hopeless confusion, nevertheless there remain the gravest inconsistencies between the different conceptions men have formed of God. In view of the path we have already traversed this fact hardly requires comment or elucidation. The notion of God, we know, has changed with changes in culture and spiritual attainment on man's part: it develops with human development. In the face of these facts we can understand that the question, Is there a God? has seldom thrust itself on human minds in this purely general form. When the problem about God arises, it commonly does so in the form of a doubt whether the traditional conception of God denotes a real being or not. The speculative problem has always its point of practical reference; and man is impelled to think, because he desires to know whether he can go on believing in the manner he has hitherto done.

In our present inquiry the first point to be clear about is our attitude to what we may call the historic representations of the Divine Being. The remarks in a previous chapter about the relation of a Philosophy of Religion to a particular religion hold, of course, in regard to the conception of God in such a religion. A religious philosophy, though in the end it may lend support to a historic idea of the Divine Being, cannot, to begin with, select any historic idea of Deity as setting the special problem it has to solve. If such a philosophy is to rise to the height of its argument, it must base itself on religious experience in its fulness and diversity; and it must regard the phenomena from the genetic or developmental standpoint. Only when we survey the phenomena of the religious consciousness from the genetic point of view, can

we understand the similarities and differences between the various ideas of God, and discern the lines of connexion between them. What at first sight seemed a radical opposition is now revealed as the outcome of a common religious consciousness which has passed through different stages, and has been reflected through the media of diverse levels of spiritual culture. From the stone fetish to the Father of Spirits is a vast distance—indeed they seem wide as the poles asunder; but they are linked together by the desires and needs of the human mind which work at every point of religious evolution. The forms of the God-idea, therefore, have a unity and a connexion through the active mind which reveals and expresses itself in them. It is not by accident that the spirit of man, reacting on stimuli from the environment, develops an idea of God corresponding to its own self-development. If it be true that man is 'incurably religious,' it is because there is something in him that makes him so. "Man's nature is so constituted that some kind of consciousness of God is inevitable to him, although it may be only a presentiment or a search."[1]

Accordingly the development of the idea of God will serve for a guide to the speculative thinker who is seeking what is central and essential in the notion. There is a continuity and a logic in history which show that human freedom does not mean caprice, and in the course of historic development ideas and values are subjected to a prolonged test. The process of development, we may safely conclude, by which a great conception is defined and purified, formed and sustained, gives us a clue to the significance and value of that idea, even though it cannot be taken finally to decide its truth. A conception, changing yet enduring, like the conception of God, testifies to some large self-fulfilment which the human soul attains through it. A value which persists and maintains itself in the developing life of mankind, can only do so because it

[1] Pfleiderer's Gifford Lectures on *The Philosophy and Development of Religion*, vol. i. p. 196.

is in harmony with the nature of man and of the world in which his lot is cast. If we look then to the evolution of the religious consciousness, what conclusion do we draw in reference to the character which it attributes to the Object? It cannot be doubted that man's religious history shows a gradual, though not by any means a continual or uninterrupted, movement from the natural to the spiritual. The God whom the developed culture of the modern world requires must at least be a spiritual and ethical Being: every lower conception of Deity has in the end failed to satisfy the growing human spirit. Man who is an ethical personality can only bow in worship before a Being in whom he sees his ideal of goodness realised, and who responds to what is highest and best in himself. There emerges then, as the outcome of man's age-long search for God, the vision of a Reality, ethical, spiritual, and personal, in which the religious needs of humanity are fulfilled. The sympathetic student of religious history, who marks the tendency and the issues, will at the least assent to the words of a recent writer: "The dim and broken image of perfection may well be formed in sympathy and correspondence with a Perfection that is most real."[1] The religious man himself does not doubt that this is true: his whole spiritual life would become empty and meaningless to him, if he knew that his faith went out only to meet the void.

But, it may be asked, does not the religious consciousness affirm something more about the God whom it postulates than that he is an ethical and spiritual Being? In what sense, for example, does the religious mind require its God to be personal? Observe that we are not asking what answer theological thought has given to this problem, and expressed in the form of doctrinal propositions. We are trying to find out the conceptions to which the data of spiritual experience, in its developed form, point. When the question is put thus, the reply, it seems to us, can hardly be doubtful. The God of spiritual

[1] G. S. Stratton, *Psychology of the Religious Life*, 1911, p. 367.

religion is conceived after the analogy of the human personality, and is therefore capable of entering into personal relations with men: he is near and also far, present to the world and the soul, yet not identical with either and transcending both. Religious experience is based on the existence of a *relation* between the subject and the object, and is incompatible with *identity*; even genuine mysticism, though it is haunted by the thought of the absorption of the soul in God, still asserts a difference between them. Pantheism, though religions sometimes pass into it, is not a true line of religious development; and if the pantheist is logical, he must judge the offices of worship and of prayer to be superfluous or altogether meaningless. This truth deserves to be insisted upon, for we are sometimes told that only an immanent God, a God who has no existence apart from the world and the human souls in which he reveals himself, can satisfy the 'highly reflective' modern mind. The validity of this conception does not fall to be discussed just now. But the reader will remember that it is a theory put forward by speculative thought, and cannot claim to be the philosophical rendering of what is normal and constant in religious experience. Those who, for one reason or another, hold the theory to be true, ought to say it is a rectification, not an interpretation, of the religious consciousness. It will be greatly to the advantage of his work, if the religious philosopher can regard the psychological facts and the general tendency of religious experience with a sympathetic and an unprejudiced eye, seeking first and foremost to read the meaning of his data. For thought to be fruitful must stand in living relation to experience and life: otherwise it is likely to waste its energy in barren speculations. A Philosophy of Religion which is dominated by an interest exclusively speculative, and pays no heed to the actual movement of the religious spirit, may indeed offer to us a metaphysical substitute for the idea of God. But the justification of a substitute lies in its ability to perform the function of that for which it is substituted. And it is

certain that neither an Infinite Substance nor an Absolute Idea, even when persuasively commended by philosophy as the truth of the popular notion of Deity, could fulfil the spiritual office of God, or serve to explain and evaluate the data of religious experience. Nevertheless, it would be a mistake to conclude that the duty of a speculative theory of religion is merely to interpret faithfully, and draw inferences strictly from the facts of personal and racial religious experience. Though philosophy must not ignore any side of experience, its office is critical as well as interpretative. And there will be room for criticism in religion, for the religious point of view is incomplete. The religious mind occupies itself with a certain aspect of experience, passing over other aspects, while philosophy seeks to embrace experience in all its fulness. Hence postulates made from a partial point of view may require to be modified or supplemented from the point of view of the whole.

At the present time there are special grounds why those who are sincerely interested in religion should not shrink from facing the problem raised by its data. The spirit of positivism and agnosticism, though it may not assume the form of a deliberate philosophical theory, is an influential element in current thinking; and the idea is common that religion is very much a matter of emotion and sentiment, and cannot stand the test of rational criticism. Religions, it is said, are one and all the product of a pre-scientific age; they figure as survivals in the environment of modern culture, and as such they are doomed to dwindle and die. To use the sarcastic words of Schopenhauer: "Religions are like glowworms, they need the dark in order to shine." It is a fair inference that those who adopt this attitude believe that the more strenuously we apply rational reflexion to the content of religion, the less likely are we to endorse its claims. In which case the best advice a religious philosopher could give to those who love their religion, and desire to hold to it, would be: "Feel warmly towards it and act vigor-

ously on its behalf, but think about it as little as possible!" Even the plain man will realise that there is something dubious in this recommendation; and it is a questionable service to any religion to preach the doctrine, that its sole justification lies in its practical value. For the argument lies to hand, that utility and expediency are a sufficient defence of any idea or institution. But though rational reflexion fail to support the claims of the religious consciousness with logical proof, the exercise of reason is still needed to show us why such an attempt at proof fails. Moreover, though reason comes short of giving anything like demonstration in this field, its work may still be of conspicuous value in the interests of religious faith. I do not mean merely that it may conduct a psychological and an epistemological inquiry into the working of the religious mind. That is useful, but it is not enough. If you do not go beyond such an inquiry, you leave the whole question of ultimate truth unsettled: philosophy is dumb on the final issue, and the individual can decide for himself in response to the appeal of the feelings or by a 'venture of faith.' The real danger is that a religion which ignores the claims of reason, and moves without its guiding light, is apt to fall into fanaticism and superstition, or to drift into obscurantism. Surely the more excellent way is to exercise our reason on the content of our religion, and to follow its leading so far as we legitimately can; only thus can we hope to bring religion into vital relations with science and philosophy. It is, indeed, well not to expect too much from speculative thought, and there are those who like to remind us that 'our little systems have their day.' But if philosophical reflexion even made it clear that the postulates of the religious consciousness are not antagonistic to those of science and speculative thought, it would have performed a service whose value could not be gainsaid.

The data of religion, by their variety and by their divergences, press upon us the problem of the ultimate truth of religious experience. And it is natural to ask

how the study of the data may help us to answer this question. Plainly the facts, to be of service, must be regarded as a connected whole: they must be seen in relation to the general development of religion, and be interpreted in connexion with it. In particular, the facts of religious evolution have to be used to bring out, if possible, the idea of God towards which the religious spirit seems to strive, and in which it finds the fullest satisfaction. Now it is true the study of religious development will not enable us to define accurately a conception of God, which completely and universally satisfies the religious mind. The tendencies at work are too diverse for this. What we do find, is a movement through imperfect and unsatisfying conceptions to conceptions more perfect and satisfying; and so long as religion develops, we shall not be able to say it presents to us an idea of God absolutely final. Nevertheless a study such as we have been considering does show that the line of development in religion is in the direction of a personal and ethical God, a God who enters into personal communion and sustains ethical relations with men. This is without doubt the conception of Deity which best maintains itself in the evolution of religion, and is most fruitful in its working. To investigate the truth of this idea is therefore a problem which is set to the religious philosopher by the facts of religious experience.

I do not think we are entitled to say more, than that man's spiritual experience shows us the idea of God which on the whole prevails, and in the long run works best. The notion that the evolution of religion is itself a logical movement, a movement which is a continuous, progressive, and certain definition of what God is, will not stand criticism. The facts are far too complicated to fall into this clear-cut scheme, and historic development does not answer the questions it raises in such a convincing fashion.

The demands of the religious spirit, as they have worked themselves out in the historic process, have yielded the notion of an ethical and personal God. Is the nature

of reality such that this conception of God can be justified? This is the great and enduring problem of a Philosophy of Religion. In proceeding to treat of this subject I shall begin by examining certain historic attempts which have been made to give rational proof of the existence of God.

B.—Proofs of the Existence of God.

The importance of the traditional proofs of the existence of God has greatly diminished in modern times. No one, remarks the late Prof. Pfleiderer, now holds it possible to prove the divine existence from an abstract conception of God, or, from an abstract conception of the world, to reach by inference a God who is separate from the world.[1] Nor can it be said that these proofs have ever played a part in producing religious conviction where it did not already exist; their ostensible function has rather been to confirm religious belief than to create it. The proofs themselves do not set out from religious presuppositions, either explicit or implicit. The presuppositions from which they start are quite general and abstract; and the standing difficulty in the argument has always been, that the concrete reality at which they aim contains more than is to be found in the premisses. Those who developed the Theistic Arguments had a clear idea of what they wanted to reach, and they hoped to reach it by logical thinking. The misfortune was that they were not fully conscious of the disparity between the means and the end. The 'proofs' have been a favourite theme of comment and criticism; in truth, the subject has been treated so often by theologians and philosophers that it has been worn threadbare, and it has become well-nigh impossible to say anything new on the topic. There is a consensus of opinion that the arguments are not valid in their present form; but some who admit this believe that they can be reconstructed so as to have weight, though the weight does not amount to demonstration. It

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. i. p. 137.

will be necessary to refer to these reconstructions, and the whole subject, however familiar, can hardly be passed over here: for it is of historic interest, and shows the way in which thought has come to the aid of faith by offering rational proof that the object of faith is real. The proofs represent modes in which the human mind, through the exercise of reasoning meant to be universal and cogent, sought to justify to itself the truth of its religious conviction. A short discussion and criticism of these proofs will help to define more clearly in our minds the nature of the problem before us. And when we understand where certain solutions have failed, and why they failed, we shall see better the lines on which a solution may be profitably attempted.

The proof which is usually taken first is the Ontological. It is the one which raises the deepest philosophical issues, and, as we shall see, the other proofs implicitly assume its validity. The Ontological Argument has been stated in slightly different ways, but its essential contention is, that the *reality* of God is involved in the *idea* of God. There is something, it is urged, unique in the idea of God, so that it cannot be a mere idea. Anselm (1033–1109) presented this proof in its scholastic form. It runs thus: God is a Being than which a greater cannot be conceived (*id quo majus cogitari nequit*); but an idea which existed only *in intellectu* would not be so great as one which existed *in re* as well as *in intellectu*; therefore God must be thought as necessarily existing. This argument has been set forth in a simpler and less artificial form by Descartes. He omits the step which declares that what exists in fact as well as in idea is greater than what exists merely in idea, and affirms that the very notion of God, the most perfect Being, carries existence as necessarily with it as the idea of a triangle carries with it the equality of the sum of its angles to two right angles. In short, reality belongs, and is clearly perceived to belong, to the very notion of God. Descartes is well aware that this line of reasoning will not hold in regard to other objects of

thought, but he maintains the idea of God to be unique in the respect that it involves existence. This specific claim is the crux of the argument. A second form of proof was offered by Descartes. In this case the argument asserts that the idea of God, who is infinite and perfect, cannot be formed in man by any finite object, and must be caused by God himself. It is implied here that the idea of the Infinite is positive and cannot be reached *via negationis*. But, even if this were not open to objection, the term Infinite connotes much less than is signified by God. Still, taken simply as a probable argument, the thought is suggestive and not without weight, that man's knowledge of God is due to God himself. He is the sufficient reason of the idea of himself in man.

The reader may have already begun to suspect that the force of these attempted proofs depends a good deal on what you mean by God. And this receives a rather striking confirmation in the case of the thinker who comes after Descartes in the philosophical succession—Spinoza. Spinoza, like Descartes, infers from the idea of God, as the source and sum of all perfection, his existence. But for Spinoza, God, or Substance, is the infinite and all-inclusive Whole, within which fall the parallel differentiations of thought and extension as its corresponding aspects. On this construction of the term God his reality is inevitably involved in his idea. But there is here no transition from the essence as idea to the reality, for the one is bound up with the other. In fact, if God is defined in a purely pantheistic way, the very notion of a proof of his existence becomes not only superfluous but absurd. To say the essence of God involves his existence is quite true, if we grant Spinoza's presuppositions; but these in effect prejudge the whole question. So far as Spinoza is concerned the important point is not his proof of the existence of God, for this is purely verbal, but the validity of the philosophical conceptions on which his system is based. The same dependence on a philosophical system is seen in the theistic proof of Leibniz. This proof might

perhaps more fitly be taken to illustrate a phase of the Cosmological Argument, but since it has interesting points of contact and contrast with Spinoza's proof, I shall briefly refer to it here. Leibniz's argument proceeds on a distinction which he draws in his philosophy between the possible and the actual, the essence and the existence. With Spinoza, on the other hand, all that is possible is actual. Leibniz argues: "If there is a reality in essences or possibilities, or rather in eternal truths, this reality must needs be founded in something existing and actual, and consequently in the existence of the necessary Being in whom essence involves existence, or in whom to be possible is to be actual."[1] Leibniz means by essences, possibilities or tendencies to exist, and these in turn he identifies with eternal truths. The gist of the argument is, that these possibilities must have their ground in something actual, in the existence of a Necessary Being. In the case of a perfect Being what is possible is actual, for there can be nothing to hinder the tendency to exist. In this instance also the cogency of the argument depends on the postulates of a metaphysical system, and the notion of possibility implied in the system. But it is manifest the line of proof which Leibniz endeavours to work out could not give, for its conclusion, a Necessary Being who is separate from the world in which possibilities are realised.

At the hands of Kant the Ontological Proof was subjected to a penetrating criticism, and since Kant's day it has ceased to be put forward seriously in the old form. His criticism proceeds on the principle that existence is no part of the content of an idea. "Being is evidently not a real predicate, that is, a conception of something that is capable of being added to the conception of a thing. . . . I add nothing to my conception, which expresses merely the possibility of the object, by simply placing its object before me in thought, and saying that it *is*. The real contains no more than the possible. A hundred real

[1] *Monadology*, sec. 44, Latta's translation.

dollars do not contain a cent more than a hundred possible dollars."[1] Kant has shown conclusively, that it is not possible from the analysis of a conception to deduce from it existence as a predicate. Even when we feel that existence does belong to an idea or combination of ideas, we are not entitled to say that the union of existence and idea is more than a union in idea. It has, however, been objected that, while Kant's reasoning may hold of the idea of a particular thing,—say a sum of money—the idea of God as the absolute Being is in a different position. On this ground Hegel tried to rehabilitate the Ontological Proof. In the Hegelian terminology, the being of a finite object in space and time is discrepant from its notion. "God, on the contrary, expressly has to be what can only be 'thought as existing'; His notion involves being." "Certainly it would be strange if the notion, the very inmost of mind, if even the 'Ego,' or above all, the concrete totality we call God, were not rich enough to include so poor a category as being, the very poorest and most abstract of all."[2] With Hegel, as with Spinoza, if we grant the principles of his system, if we agree that the term God means what he meant by it, then the notion of God involves his being. For with Hegel being does not lie beyond thought: it is its initial and simplest determination as it moves dialectically forward to fully articulated self-consciousness. On this theory reality does not stand over against thought, but is immanent in it. To say, however, that all being falls within the development of mind is a highly disputable proposition, and Hegel's reconstruction of the Ontological Argument shares to the full the weakness of this initial assumption. But even were Hegel's principle sound, it is obvious his line of thought could not lead to a God who transcended the world, and had a being for himself apart from the world and the self-conscious

[1] *Transcendental Dialectic*, Prof. Watson's translation, pp. 208–209.

[2] *Logic of Hegel*, Wallace's tr., 2nd ed., pp. 108–109. The validity of the Theistic Proofs was a subject in which Hegel was interested, and he has written at some length on them in the Appendix to his *Phil. der Religion*.

spirits in which he realises himself. And the higher religious consciousness demands this.

It is sometimes said in reply to this criticism, that, if what we are obliged to think is not necessarily real, there is an end to all proof and reasoning. And this consideration has weighed with some thinkers, who, in consequence, find themselves unable to accept Kant's condemnation of the Ontological Argument.[1] Beyond doubt, if thought cannot be valid of a reality beyond the thinker, we are plunged into a hopeless scepticism. If we set out from real premisses and think out their implications logically, then our conclusions will hold good of reality. But this is far from proving that the conception of God as a Being with a determinate character—a conception not reached by strict inference from data of experience—implies his existence. There is a sense, however, in which a grain of truth is contained in the Ontological Proof, though the argument neither is nor can be made a proof of God in the religious meaning of the term. If for God we substitute the technical phrase *Ens Realissimum*, or a Being who is the sum of all reality, then it is difficult to suppose that such a conception is a mere idea in the mind. For thought has reference to being, and would be meaningless without it: were there no being there would be no thinking. And if so, there seems to be no sense in saying there is not a sum of reality or a most real Being. There is nothing contradictory in such a notion, and there is no relevant ground for denying its truth. But it is evident

[1] So A. Dorner, *Religionsphilosophie*, p. 202. Cp. also Webb, *Problems in the Relations of God and Man*, 1911, p. 186. Mr. Webb thinks Kant has not finally discredited the Ontological Proof, "if we understand it not as having to do with a particular case in which we are compelled to believe in the reality of the object of a conception, but as the assertion that the existence of knowledge implies an ultimate union of thought with reality." The writer, it may be noted, does not say "ultimate identity." The late Prof. Pfleiderer endeavoured to reconstruct the Ontological Argument by postulating God as the ground of the co-ordination and correspondence of thought and reality. But even though we accepted the fact of such a 'correspondence,' the theistic inference is not necessary. E. von Hartmann argues from the same premisses to a very different conclusion.

when the Ontological Argument is thus reduced to the form in which it begins to be valid, it has become quite useless for any religious purpose. Whenever we begin to qualify the concept of being with the attributes which pertain to Deity, we cease to have logical warrant that our connexions in idea are also connexions in fact. The transition from God in idea to God in reality cannot be made in this way. The source of the vitality of the Ontological Argument—of the lingering belief that, after all, there is something in it—must be sought elsewhere than in the cogency of its logic. It lies, as Lotze has pointed out, in the rooted disinclination of the human spirit to believe that the Supreme Being, who is the Supreme Value, is only a fiction of the mind.[1] The refusal to entertain the thought is not due to convincing argument, but to the demands of inner experience. The Ontological Proof, in its traditional form, represents an artificial way in which men sought to justify to themselves a faith, of the truth of which they felt sure on other grounds.

In its method the second of the Theistic Proofs, the Cosmological, is sounder than the Ontological. It sets out from the world as given, and from the character of the world infers the existence of a God to explain it. This line of thought was at least suggested by Plato in the *Timæus*, where he says that every created thing must be created by some cause.[2] It is also hinted at by Augustine: "And I beheld the other things below Thee, and I perceived that they neither are absolutely existent nor absolutely non-existent. For they are, since they are from Thee, but are not, because they are not what Thou art. For that truly is which remains unchangeably."[3] The Cosmological Proof has two forms. In the first instance we set out from the contingency of facts within the world: they may either be or not be—so it is said, and there is no element of necessity in them. This contingency, however,

[1] *Microcosmus*, Eng. tr., vol. ii. p. 671. Cp. also *Religionsphilosophie*, pp. 9–10.

[2] *Tim.* p. 27 ff.

[3] *Confessions*, Bk. vii. cap. xi.

must lead up to something which is necessary, and we have to posit a necessary Being as the ground of the contingent. The other form of proof makes use of the principle of causality. In our experienced world effects are always preceded by causes, and these in turn are the effects of other causes. So the chain of causality runs back step by step. But an infinite line of causes is impossible, and there must come a point in the series at which we arrive at a First or Uncaused Cause. This First Cause of all the different series of causes is God.

Kant was no doubt right when he said that this proof could not yield a necessary Being over and above the given series of facts. Moreover, we are not justified in assuming, without evidence, that data within our world are contingent; and even if this were so, it would not follow that the world itself in its totality is contingent. Again, it may be asked, Why is the Unconditioned Being said to be necessary? The necessary, in the current use of the word, is that which is conditioned, in other words determined to be what it is and not something else; and this idea of necessity should not be predicated uncritically of the Unconditioned. Nor is it apparent how a world of *contingent* facts could be derived from a necessary Being. On the other hand, if we think the line of regress under the notion of effects and causes, there are just as good reasons for saying the series can be prolonged indefinitely as that it must end in a First Cause. Then the causal series in the world are manifold, and it is not legitimate to assume that all the lines converge upon and end in a single Cause. Why not a plurality of First Causes? Finally, there is the objection that the notion of cause is a category by which we connect and organise elements within experience, and ought not to be applied without some reason and explanation to a Being supposed to exist beyond the experienced world. The truth is that, while the principle is sound that we should argue from the facts of experience to a ground of experience, the Cosmological Proof gives effect to this principle in a faulty and one-

sided way. It tries to reach a certain goal by setting out from data and using a method which preclude it from reaching the goal. This line of proof, even were it purified of flaws, could not take us beyond the world-system; it could not lead us to God in the theistic sense of the word.

The third of the traditional proofs, the Teleological, is rather an extension, or a special application, of the Cosmological than a separate argument. Like the latter, it infers that a particular aspect or character of the world requires the existence of God to explain it. The Teleological Proof bases itself on the presence of order in the world; this order it takes to be the token of design, and concludes that God must be the source of that design. Of all the Proofs this, to the ordinary mind, is the most simple and striking. The existence of design in nature at first blush seems so transparent, and the need for applying the human analogy of the designer and his material so obvious. The Teleological Argument is consequently an old one; and Plato has in substance made use of it when he suggested that the principle that mind orders all things was the only one worthy of the world around us and the heavens above us.[1] The natural tendency of thought in this matter is fairly reflected by the words of Bacon: "For while the mind of man looketh upon second causes scattered, it may sometimes rest upon them and go no farther; but when it beholdeth the chain of them confederate and linked together, it must needs fly to Providence and Deity."[2] And Kant, it is well known, treated the Teleological Proof more tenderly than the others, and said that "it must be always mentioned with respect." But he very pertinently remarked: "All that the argument from design can possibly prove is an *architect* of the world, who is very much limited by the adaptability of the material in which he works." On the evidence it is inadmissible to say that such a Being is supreme, omnipotent, and the creator of the world.

[1] Philebus, p. 28 E: *τὸ δὲ νοῦν πάντα διακοσμεῖν αὐτὰ φάναι καὶ τῆς ὄψεως τοῦ κόσμου καὶ ἡλίου καὶ σελήνης καὶ ἀστέρων καὶ πάσης τῆς περιφορᾶς ἄξιον.*

[2] *Vid.* his essay on Atheism.

The human designer is hampered by an intractable element in the matter which he manipulates, and the way in which he overcomes this intractability is a token of his intelligence and foresight. It is obvious that this conception cannot be consistently applied to a Being supposed to be omnipotent, who cannot therefore be limited by his material in the way that man is. Moreover, while it may well be that so-called matter is incapable of producing order and adaptation, those who argue from design ought not to take this for granted. The physico-theological proof, as it is sometimes called, fails owing to the mechanical and external way in which it deals with order and adaptation in nature, and it has lost much of its former force owing to the growth and influence of the idea of evolution in modern times. I have already referred to the transformation of teleological ideas by the modern principle of development in the previous chapter, and I need not repeat here what was said there. The result has been that the notion of external design has been replaced by that of immanent adaptation, and the complex harmony of parts in organisms is regarded as a continuous development from simpler forms. It may be well to repeat that the presence of immanent ends in the world does not prove the existence of an intelligence which is above or apart from the world-system. We have already tried to show that this inward finalism is consistent with theism, but it certainly does not point to a theistic conception of the universe as its only possible explanation.

As Kant explained, the three Theistic Proofs are intimately related to one another. The teleological proof leans back on the cosmological, and the cosmological in turn leans back on the ontological. If we follow the natural progress of the human mind in its endeavour to rise by reflexion to the idea of God, we have to reverse the order in which we have taken the proofs. The evidences of design, which he seemed to find in the world around him, led man in the first instance to think of a designer, and this designer he identified with God. Further reflexion

served to show that the argument must be extended to embrace the world as a whole, and the world, it was inferred, must have a First Cause who was God. But it is plain that both these arguments imply the principle which is stated explicitly in the Ontological Argument. They presuppose the principle that what we find ourselves obliged to think holds of reality; and this is the nerve of the Ontological Proof. In short, all the arguments involve the validity and trustworthiness of thought. We have already indicated in what sense, and with what qualifications this far-reaching principle is to be understood; and in any case, whatever stress is laid on this principle, the premisses of the traditional proofs are not such that they could yield the existence of God for their logical conclusion.

Two further arguments fall to be mentioned—the Moral Proof and the Historical Proof. Though it is usual to speak of them as proofs, they are not proofs in the true sense of the word, and they do not claim to be so. The first of these, the Moral Argument, seeks to show that in the existence of God we find the best solution to the problems of the moral life. The form which this argument received at the hands of Kant is peculiar, and it is not satisfactory. Kant says it is a demand of the moral self that the highest Good be realised. But in the highest Good there are two elements, virtue and happiness: the consciousness of duty fulfilled and of desire satisfied. Now, for Kant, virtue and happiness belong to two different worlds, the former to the intelligible and the latter to the phenomenal world. How can the union of these diverse elements demanded by the Supreme Good be assured? Kant replies by the postulate of God as the teleological ground of both worlds: God then guarantees the union of virtue and happiness, and therefore the realisation of the Chief Good. All this is very artificial. It is not a psychological description of the motives which lead men to postulate a God; nor is it consistent with Kant's own premisses that an empirical and sensuous

product, which he deems happiness to be, should be raised to a constituent of the Supreme Good. Yet if we disentangle Kant's argument from the adventitious elements which hamper it, we can present it in a form which is not without force. While not committing ourselves to the Kantian doctrine of a noumenal and a phenomenal world, we are justified in accepting the existence of an ethical and a natural order, a material and a spiritual world. The moral consciousness demands the realisation of its ideal of Good, but this demand presupposes that the natural world is adapted to the ends of the spirit. The possibility of this adaptation is contained in the conception of an ethical God who is ground of both worlds and pledge of their harmony. Though we do not demonstrate God's existence in this way, we at least show how the postulate of his existence solves an urgent ethical problem. Nor can the argument from the moral consciousness be made to yield more than this. The feeling of obligation—the sense of duty—cannot be explained from beneath: no naturalistic theory of evolution can account for the birth of the word *ought* in the mind of man. The thought therefore lies to hand that it must be explained from above, through man's relation to a Moral Power that governs the world. It is a fact of deepest significance that man, a moral being with a sense of right and wrong, has developed within the universe, and we rightly ask: What must the character of that universe be which gives birth to such a being? When we postulate a God in answer to this question we are basing our postulate on the demands of the moral consciousness. And this is the legitimate use of the Moral Argument.

The Historical Proof is the name often given to the argument *e consensu gentium*. What we have here is not, of course, a proof, but a suggestion that the only sufficient reason of the widespread consciousness of God in human minds is God himself. The thought conveyed is closely related to the Moral Proof, which finds an explanation of the facts of the moral consciousness in the existence of an

ethical Deity.[1] Unfortunately, if we take the argument for what it originally professed to be, an inference from human agreement, the historical evidences do not show us the agreement which is necessary. For to agree that God is, means little unless there is some concord in regard to *what* he is. Now there is a consensus of belief on the part of mankind in some Power above them, but in regard to the nature of this Power beliefs are very confused and conflicting, and they range from gross materialism to refined spiritualism. If we take these ideas as they stand, in their variety and mutual inconsistency, we cannot build any solid argument upon them. On the other hand, if we revise the proof and state it in the light of the idea of development, it assumes a sounder and more hopeful form. The reality of God then becomes a postulate of the developing spiritual experience of humanity. The long upward journey of the race, during which the idea of a spiritual God has gradually taken form and substance in human minds, becomes a meaningless movement if there be no Reality corresponding to the idea. We may add, the argument from history does not depend on a metaphysical theory of the process of development, nor on a speculative conception of the relation of God to man. It rests on an unbiassed view of the development of religion, and it puts the case with studious moderation when it declares, that it is hard to believe that this growing consciousness of God as a spiritual and ethical Being has not its source and ground in God himself.[2]

When we look back on these well-meant endeavours to demonstrate the existence of God, we can only reiterate the judgment we formed by the way: as proofs they break down. They suggest probabilities, probabilities of greater or less degree; but they carry no conviction to the minds of those who demand cogent logic. Proof means logical

[1] The Historical Proof was put forward in substance by Descartes, as the reader will remember, though in a metaphysical rather than in a historical form.

[2] It was the same motive which lent vitality to the Ontological Proof—the demand of the spiritual consciousness that the Supreme Value be real.

connexion or implication, and to infer God from the world and its character is to put more into the conclusion than is contained in the premisses. God in the sense that spiritual religion demands can never be reached by any deductive argument; and there is truth in the trenchant words of the late Professor James: "The attempt to demonstrate by purely intellectual processes the truth of the deliverances of direct religious experience is absolutely hopeless."[1] Unfortunately, it took men a long time to discover this. But though these Proofs are in principle unsound, they are not on that account entirely valueless. For one thing, they testify to the confidence of the human spirit that reason can support the claims of faith, that the God who is necessary to the inner life can also be justified by reflective thinking. The Theistic Proofs are, in their own fashion, a witness to a persisting conviction on man's part that his religion is not a non-rational attitude of mind. The attempt to reach God by rational deduction may be taken as the symptom and expression of a constant tendency of the human spirit, which is central in the religious consciousness. This movement carries the spiritual self beyond its environment, beyond the world, to gain a deeper ground of thought and life in the Being whom it calls God. The religious man, it is true, does not reach this goal by inference from the world or what is in it: he is prompted to take this course by his practical and experimental knowledge that "the world and the desire thereof" cannot satisfy him. The inspiring motive, alike of the arguments for the existence of God and of the Godward movement of the religious spirit, is the sincere conviction that the world is imperfect and needs a deeper Reality to complete it. Both for thought and for spiritual experience the world proves unsatisfying, and so impels men to go beyond it to find its true explanation and value. The Theistic Proofs, despite their shortcomings, recognise this, and they have worth as the symptom and the symbol of the general movement of the religious mind.

[1] *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 435.

C.—Experience and its Relation to God.

The foregoing discussion of a well-worn theme has at least helped to bring out some of the difficulties which beset our investigation, and to show the direction in which an attempt to solve the problem is most likely to succeed. The ontological value of religion centres in the reality and character of God; and if we are to treat this momentous subject fruitfully, it must be on a broader basis and by methods more flexible than we have just been considering. There need be no longer a question of strict proof, for in this instance the conditions which are necessary to a logical demonstration are absent. But we may hope to present converging lines of evidence which, by their cumulative effect, justify a theistic conclusion.

There are two lines of approach to the idea of God which suggest themselves. These lines may be termed the Cosmological and the Moral and Religious. In the former case we proceed from the nature of the universe as it is known to us in experience; and in the latter we set out from the facts of moral and religious experience which are manifested collectively in history, and also are revealed in personal lives. The one argument is mainly concerned with what is commonly termed outer experience, the other with inner experience: in the first case we have more to do with facts, in the second with values. But the one argument cannot be ultimately separated from the other; indeed the only hopeful method is to make them supplement and complete one another, so that each may strengthen what is weak in the other and both unite to give weight to the conclusion. The tendency to use only one argument, or to lay almost exclusive stress on one line of evidence, has weakened the conclusions of many conscientious workers in this department of thought. For instance, men have often supposed they could arrive at a true idea of God by a metaphysical interpretation of the world, taken to mean external things and human minds in their mutual relations. The conse-

quence has been that, with the eye fixed only on the metaphysical problem, they have set up a metaphysical abstraction in the place of God. The late Prof. H. Sidgwick, in a paper on *Theism*, has made the just remark, that there is a difference between the God reached by metaphysics and the God required by the Christian religion. And I think we may generalise and say, that the religious consciousness always postulates more in its object than metaphysics can justify. But if metaphysics tends to yield a formal and abstract Being in place of a living and spiritual God, those who work at the problem purely from the side of inner or religious experience encounter difficulties and dangers of another kind. They are apt to make a free and uncritical use of the principle of analogy, without stopping to ask whether their use of the principle is valid or not. In your anxiety to do justice to the claims of spiritual consciousness, you may make demands on the universe without considering whether the nature of reality is such that it can satisfy them. This neglect of metaphysical issues must seriously affect the stability of results which have been reached by a onesided method. A theory of religion, or a theology, which is consistently anti-metaphysical, leaves us at the last in doubt whether the Being postulated in response to human needs is not ideal rather than real. Hence a speculative theory of religion will seek ultimately to connect these lines of argument, the metaphysical and the religious, and if possible to harmonise their results. Such a task will, no doubt, involve criticism and modification of both in the interests of unity. For convenience' sake it will be necessary to follow out each line by itself in the first instance, and then to bring them, if possible, into a vital and harmonious relation with one another.

The scope of the inquiry and the method to be followed in the two arguments may here be briefly indicated. In the first or metaphysical inquiry, we set out from the world regarded as a system of experienced objects and

experient subjects. From this common basis of facts every philosophy must set out, however it may finally interpret and explain them. The question then arises, What do these facts imply? The attempt to answer this question means an endeavour to work back from what is presented in experience in order to discover what is presupposed by it. This regressive movement will not be one of strict inference, as was ostensibly the case with the Theistic Proofs. Reflexion or speculative thinking must be allowed a freedom of operation while it braces itself to the task of thinking out constructively a sufficient Ground of experience. This thinking takes cognisance of what is given, but also goes beyond it, in order to unfold its deeper meaning. In this way speculation will try to make plain, if it can, the ground or sufficient reason of what is given. Now to develop this conception of a World-Ground implies that we accord to thought the right of speculative construction. Such construction corresponds on a higher level to the work of the man of science, who thinks out a theory in order to connect and unify his data. To some, however, this may seem to allow speculation a dangerous latitude, and it is usual in these days to proclaim the futility of the *a priori* way of philosophising. Yet the scheme of investigation here suggested has nothing in common with the method of those who develop a speculative system, and then try to make the facts of experience correspond with it. This mode of speculation is out of fashion just now, and there is a general recognition that a philosophy of experience must grow out of experience itself. At the same time any metaphysics worthy of the name must rethink experienced facts; and in doing this it is only carrying out and completing the work of the sciences. For even the physical sciences go beyond the phenomenal aspect of things, and seek to reach and exhibit the principles and relations on which phenomena depend. Such results, however, are necessarily provisional, and the metaphysician sets himself to trace the data of experience back to their first principles, and so to find a broad and sure foundation for

them. There will always be a tentative element about such work, for it does not admit of the same kind of verification as a scientific theory. Still a venture of thought is inevitable, if man is to satisfy his rational nature and gain a deeper insight into things. And there is, at all events, the kind of test possible which is implied in the degree of consistency with which a speculative theory can be applied to concrete experience, and in the coherency of the world-view it unfolds. This, then, is a metaphysical inquiry carried out from the standpoint of the metaphysician, and in the nature of the case it cannot give us a philosophy of religion. But it will at least show us how far metaphysical thinking can bring us towards our goal.

The other line of inquiry keeps the religious experience, which is a specific aspect of general experience, definitely in view, and sets itself to show the relation to God which is presupposed by that experience. The development of religion, as a psychological phenomenon and as a historic movement, is a process so characteristic, that it requires consideration and explanation on any theory of the nature of the universe. A philosophy which does not leave room for, nor give an explanation of, the growth of the religious consciousness, cannot seriously claim to be true. I have already referred in this chapter to the objections against an attempt to solve the religious problem by a purely naturalistic theory. The theory which regards religion as the mere product of an interaction between man and his environment, as a natural relationship giving birth to material hopes and fears, is a theory which in the long run will not work. It is not without a certain plausibility when used to interpret the lowest forms and expressions of religion, but it ceases to be plausible when applied to religion in its higher and spiritual stages. How a religious consciousness generated by purely natural causes should by and by react against the natural order, and finally proclaim the inadequacy of the world to its deepest needs, is quite inexplicable. For why should it thus ignore the "rock from which it was hewn and the pit from which it was digged"? A

religious soul which persistently turns to a goal in the spiritual and supramundane sphere cannot have its sufficient reason in material interests and sensuous instincts. The spirit that 'denies the world' cannot be 'of the world.'

But if the naturalistic theory of the genesis and growth of moral and religious experience proves to be inadequate, we are perforce led to ask whether this development is not to be explained from above rather than from below. In other words, should a process which issues in spiritual values and ideals not be referred to a Source which is spiritual? If it be true that the significance of a process of development is not to be found in its beginning but in its outcome, there is much to be said for the method which seeks a 'sufficient reason' of spiritual development in a supreme and spiritual Ground of experience.

I think we are justified in pressing this consideration on those who are sceptical of the reality of the object of religious faith. Granted that the idea of God is an illusion, can you, on these premisses, give an adequate theory of the origin and development of moral and spiritual experience? Now it is not enough to reply, as some are inclined to do, that religious beliefs are the outcome of imagination acting under the stimulus of hopes and fears. In particular cases this may sometimes be true, but it does not explain the persistent movement of the religious consciousness towards a Divine Object in which it can find satisfaction. That movement has never ceased in human history; though mankind revises and changes its religious ideas, it does not abandon religion, but seeks to express its religious faith in some more adequate form. Why then this continuous and enduring religious experience? It is not sufficient to refer us to human nature, and to tell us man is 'incurably religious.' Neither psychological nor historical explanations of this experience are ultimate, for they point back to some deeper ground in the nature of things. In this instance a Source or Ground is needed which will explain that

spiritual nature of man and the characteristic spiritual development which issues from it.

A noteworthy feature of the developed religious consciousness is that it finds the Supreme Reality and the Supreme Value in an Object which transcends the world. And if the evolution of religion cannot be explained as the result of mundane conditions, the alternative is to trace it to its ultimate Source in a living relation between human spirits and a supramundane Spirit. On this theory the religious experience which leads man to find his final good beyond the world, would have its ultimate Ground in a transcendent and spiritual God.

It is right to remind the reader that, though we speak of explaining the religious experience by reference to a transcendent Source, we do not and cannot mean explanation in the scientific sense of the term. For this, we know, signifies the establishment of rational implication and connexion between parts. God could only explain mundane experience in this way, if his Being were bound up with that experience in the manner that a system is with its elements. The note of a transcendent Being is, that it cannot thus be co-ordinated with the parts of the world, nor can its activity be rationally deduced.[1] Hence a transcendent God 'explains' experience because he is its Sufficient Ground; but we cannot argue from the Ground to the dependent experience, nor can we show how the experience issues from the Ground.

This twofold regress on the Ground of reality and the Ground of the religious consciousness will help us to do justice to both these sides of experience. But it will bring us at the last face to face with the cardinal problem of religious philosophy—the problem how to reconcile the

[1] The presence of a residual element in experience, which cannot be co-ordinated, has been emphasised by the late Professor J. J. Gourd. This is the leading thought of his *Phil. de la Religion* (1911), and determines his conception and working out of the theory of the religious relation. Siebeck (*Religionsphilosophie*, p. 331 ff.) points out we cannot deduce the activity of a transcendent Being.

idea of God which is the outcome of scientific and speculative thinking with the idea of God which is postulated to explain religious experience. As a recent worker in this field has put it: we have to establish the Being of God "in such a manner as to meet the legitimate demands of modern science and philosophy," and to expound the "spirituality of this Being" so as "to afford evidence of the essential truth of humanity's religious experience."[1] It would be too much to expect a complete success in this difficult undertaking. Even to show that the two lines of evidence do not run steadily apart but converge on a common goal is to have achieved something. For it means that science and faith are drawn a little closer to one another. A philosophy which achieves this much has not failed, even though it cannot comprehend all 'the deep things of God.'

[1] Ladd, *Phil. of Religion*, vol. ii. p. 68.

CHAPTER XI.

THE SPECULATIVE CONCEPTION OF A WORLD-GROUND.

Introductory.

The task of Metaphysics, like that of the special sciences, is the task of explanation. Like them it seeks to understand what is given by reflecting upon it. But the scope of the inquiry is different in the two cases. The scientist deals with a bit of reality which he selects for special study, and proceeds to 'explain' it by showing the causal connexions which are involved and the laws or uniformities which obtain there. Hence a central feature of the work of the sciences is the search for causes. The truth, however, is apparent that, while it may be enough for practical purposes to define the prominent cause or direct antecedent of a phenomenon, a fuller insight requires an understanding of the system of causes and conditions which make up the situation or context in which the phenomenon occurs. In other words, the cause, defined as the invariable antecedent of an event, is never by itself the sufficient reason of the event. Other co-operating factors must be taken into account. Hence the cause expands under scrutiny, as J. S. Mill showed, into the sum-total of conditions, positive and negative, which make the phenomenon possible. To explain, therefore, means to give the sufficient reason or the ground of the event. Needless to say no particular science can follow out the implications of its problem in this way : it must arbitrarily,

or in view of practical ends, limit the inquiry in order to make it manageable. The scope and purpose of a metaphysical inquiry do not admit of this kind of limitation. The task of Metaphysics is to complete the work of the special sciences, and to find a sufficient reason or ground of the world as a whole. In this task it has to take cognisance of the results of the natural sciences, as well as those of psychology and epistemology, and to carry these back to a final principle or ground which explains them. So regarded, Metaphysics is the completion of the sciences, and carries forward to an ultimate issue the questions they raise.

Plainly the metaphysical problem bears closely on Religion, and Religion has a direct interest in the way it is solved. For religious faith puts forward a conception of ultimate Reality, and with this the reasoned result of speculative discussion may or may not agree. Thus the findings of the religious consciousness would not be in harmony with any speculative theory which declared that the given world in space and time was ultimate, complete, and self-sufficient. Likewise at discord with the religious consciousness would be a Metaphysics which pronounced the ground of all reality to be unconscious Will or material Energy. The interest, be it said, which the religious spirit has in this subject is not in itself speculative: its interest is bound up with the relation of value to reality. The spiritual consciousness is deeply concerned with the validity of its values, and with their maintenance in the real world. And any theory of reality which leaves no room for these values, or discredits their efficiency and persistence, is felt to cut at the roots of the spiritual and religious life. On the other hand, a philosophical theory which converges towards the same goal as the religious consciousness tends to strengthen conviction in the ultimate harmony of reason and faith.

A.—The Problem of Reality: Realistic and Idealistic Solutions.

An inquiry into the nature of reality must set out from the world which is given in common experience. For only through what we actually experience can we find our way to a ground of experience, to that which is ultimately real. But obviously before we can proceed to draw inferences from the given world, we have first to answer the question: What is the nature of that world? For beyond doubt it will profoundly affect the results of the inquiry, whether the facts and things of the universe around us are real as they stand or merely appearances; whether they are solid existences independent of our minds, or nothing but states of our consciousness. So it is that idealism and materialism lead to radically different views of the meaning of the world. It is needful, therefore, to come to a decision in regard to them.

The primitive attitude of man to sensible objects is that of naïve realism. Things are in themselves just what they seem to be when presented to us: the act of perceiving makes no difference to them. This simple trust, that what things appear to be they really are, is gradually dissipated by the facts of experience. The stick thrust into the water cannot really be bent; the object which grows larger as we approach it, and changes its outline when seen from different points of view, cannot actually do so; and the seeming flash of light which accompanies a blow on the eye cannot be light. Thus there grows up an elementary distinction between things which are merely sensible appearances and things which are real in themselves. But the principle once admitted, that the perceiving mind may somehow draw wrong conclusions in regard to objects presented to the senses, was inevitably carried further. Distinctions of colour, and of hot and cold, which notoriously affected different people in different ways, could not really be in the things, but must be due to the persons affected. Hence was developed a distinction,

which Locke made current, between primary and secondary qualities of bodies. The primary qualities, like extension and solidity, were in things: the secondary qualities, like smell and colour, were simply affections of the subject. Presumably this remains the attitude of many not unintelligent persons at the present day. Nevertheless it is plain that this kind of compromise between the claims of the subject and the object cannot be final. The grounds which determine the transference of secondary qualities to the subject are just as applicable to the primary. Extension and solidity are likewise relative to the percipient mind, and it seems quite as hard to say what they can be apart from being experienced. Destitute of the sense of touch, what would solidity mean to us? or what would extension signify to a being incapable of making motor adjustments?

For long the disposition of natural scientists was to cling firmly to certain realistic assumptions, while admitting that secondary qualities were only affections of the experient subject. But in process of time it became clear how radically the conception of the nature of objects was being altered under the penetrating examination of the physicist. In the search for laws and connexions, brute matter was step by step resolved into the orderly movements of molecules and atoms; and the most recent analysis has transformed the atom into a system of electrons. When an investigator has reached this point, he has gone far beyond the stage at which a theory of the elements of matter can be verified by an appeal to the senses. The most that can be said for the conception of the atom or the electron is, that it is a logical demand, if we are to form a coherent theory of the facts.[1] The 'economic' school of physicists, represented by Mach, Ostwald, Pearson, and others, maintain that the scientist is here only dealing with 'working conceptions' by means

[1] So Cassirer, *Substanzbegriff und Functionsbegriff*, 1910, p. 207. Prof. K. Pearson speaks of the atom and molecule as 'intellectual conceptions.' *The Grammar of Science*, p. 95.

of which he can efficiently arrange and describe phenomena. His concern is not with intrinsic reality, but with practical utility. When students of physical science take up this standpoint, it is not surprising that they should discard the notions of force and matter, and should find no more in things than sense-experiences or possibilities of sensation. Thus the scientific movement, which began in a pronounced realism, has for its issue in one direction a form of idealism.

Let us now consider how the attempt to solve the problem of reality from the side of the subject fares. On this view there is no reality in things *per se*: their being lies in their being experienced, and *esse* is *percipi*. The world of objects just means the body of sense-experiences and what they suggest to the percipient mind. The most familiar expression of this theory is found in the writings of Berkeley, and there are those who still find his thought to be true and suggestive. The outcome of this line of thinking is that matter, in the ordinary acceptation of the word, vanishes, and reality is found to be minds or spirits standing in relation to a Supreme Spirit, which somehow impresses on them the orderly series of experiences that goes by the name of the material world. For to Berkeley, at least, the connexion and system in our perceptions bore palpable witness to the operations of a Divine Mind which constantly produces the impression of the world of objects in our consciousness. Berkeley's theory was ostensibly framed in a religious interest, and it may be granted that it is consistent with theism. The objection to making it part of a religious philosophy is, that its account of nature is transparently inadequate. It is true we cannot 'refute' Berkeley after the manner of Dr. Johnson by kicking a stone; yet profound thought is not needed to exhibit serious flaws in his principles of knowledge, and we shall content ourselves with a brief and rapid criticism. And, first of all, it is not the case that the mind is purely passive in sense-perception, as Berkeley supposes. The mind is always active in the

process of perceiving, and is occupying itself with something given. Again, consciousness is always consciousness of something; and it is the reverse of plain how this awareness can be identified with and function as the object of which we are aware. Moreover, it is an entirely illegitimate assumption that, because we can show that experienced objects are *de facto* related to our consciousness, they have no being *apart* from our consciousness. To be related to does not necessarily mean to be dependent upon. At one point Berkeley admitted this, for, like every sane idealist, he fought shy of solipsism, and maintained that our fellow-men have an existence apart from our knowledge of them. We do not, he says, have *ideas* of them, but *notions*; which presumably meant some kind of rational cognisance. Yet our knowledge of others is only possible because we perceive their material bodies and ways of acting, and draw inferences therefrom. The argument therefore fails to establish the total difference of kind which is necessary, if we are validly to conclude that a stone is nothing but a presentation to consciousness, while a man has a being of his own. Moreover, it would be quite fair to argue that, if you can have a *notion* that Smith or Jones exists independently of being perceived, it is also possible to form a notion or rational conclusion that a thing has an existence over and above its presentation to consciousness. Nor is it evident how a subjective idealism of this type could offer a satisfactory explanation why human beings should appear to be possessed of bodies and brains at all. On this view the correlation of mind and body must be an inexplicable illusion. Our presentations, it may be added, form a continuum which is complex, and features which enter into the presentational field of consciousness imply the existence of other features —features which we do not perceive at the time, but which in other circumstances we might have perceived, or may come to perceive. To evade these difficulties the Berkeleian idealist has to postulate a hypothetical existence in the Divine Mind for these implied existences. I

return to my room and the cold makes me aware of the fact that the fire has gone out in my absence: the inferred process of extinction on the part of the fire, therefore, took place in the Divine Mind! The artificiality of such a hypothesis is all against its truth. This implication of what exists beyond consciousness with what exists within it points to an objective order which does not depend on the experient mind. The world which is the common meeting-place of minds, and forms the basis of social life and the open field for scientific inquiry, must possess a reality of its own.

The critical philosophy of Kant was a fact of cardinal importance for the later development of idealism. In particular, the stress he laid on the distinction of the form and the matter of knowledge, and his endeavour to exhibit the articulation of the form as an expression of the unity of self-consciousness, helped to fix the lines on which transcendental idealism was to evolve. Moreover, the ill-adjusted compromise made by Kant between idealism and realism provoked an endeavour to work out the problem of knowledge and reality in a more thorough and systematic way. Mind or self-consciousness, it was urged, must come to its own, and embrace within itself the difference of subject and object. So in the hands of Kant's successors, and notably in those of Hegel, idealism became an absolute system and a rational theory of the universe. I will content myself with asking here, whether this far-reaching system does justice to that world of common experience from which all speculative theories must set out. Hegel fully accepts the principle that relation of objects to mind means dependence on mind, and he holds that the development of the structure of thought is the key to the development of the objective world. Hence it is a cardinal doctrine of his philosophy, that to follow the dialectic movement of reason is to tread the pathway which leads to ultimate Reality. Begin with simple being, which is just elementary consciousness, and you find the immanent movement of

thought inevitably carries you forward: one category after another is found to be onesided and to imply a complementary idea; these in turn imply a third and richer idea; and so we proceed developing an ever widening network of relations. As the body of rational relations or thought-determinations advances to completeness we come nearer to Reality; and in perfectly articulated reason or self-consciousness we reach what is absolutely Real. We have gained Reality which is perfect, all-inclusive, and individual. Under the transforming influence of this dialectic objects seemingly hard and fast become fluid; they pass into the system of relations which they involve, and only a process of false abstraction leads us to attribute to them a being of their own. The result of this line of idealistic thought is to reduce the world of seemingly fixed and separate things to a kind of dissolving view. The very appearance of independence in objects is due to abstraction: systematic thinking by its rigorous movement corrects this pluralism begotten of abstraction, and substitutes for it a single real Being or individual Whole, which takes up all difference into the movement of its own life.

This comprehensive system of philosophy has a close bearing on the problem of truth in religion. To accept it means that the claim of religious faith to have its goal in a Reality transcending the present world-order must at least be substantially modified. For the spiritual world to Absolute Idealism can only mean a deeper insight into, and a fuller realisation of, the truth of the present world. The secret of life is not to look above the present order but to look more deeply into it, and that with a mind purged of false abstractions. Nor can individuals have any being for themselves apart from the Absolute or God, who is identical with the world-system. Or if we hold, with an eminent interpreter of Hegel, that individual selves are real, then the Absolute means only the eternal system of selves, who neither

begin to be nor pass away.[1] In which case there is no room for a God in the religious sense of the word. In either case, therefore, it is important to ask, whether the interpretation which Absolute Idealism can give to the experienced world is sufficient to support the claims it makes and the conclusions it draws.

Now it is plain that idealism of this type is committed to the principle, that knowledge is constitutive of objects. In other words, relation to knowing consciousness means dependence upon it, and excludes existence apart from it. We shall be told that consciousness means "consciousness in general," and is not to be identified with the purely individual mind. But it is not apparent how this general consciousness can be real and function apart from individual consciousnesses. A general mind which is entirely immanent in all individual minds can only lend reality to the object through these individual minds. This means that, apart from its presence in the consciousness of individuals, the world would have no existence, a view which depends on the false assumption that existence means existence in consciousness. Moreover, in these idealistic statements the difficulty is never solved, how knowledge can be active without referring to a reality beyond its own process, and how reason can operate if there be not something other than itself to rationalise. Consciousness is always consciousness of something, and reasoning always reasoning about something. The inability of formal idealism to account for concrete experience is not a matter of to-day or yesterday: it is manifest in the philosophies of Plato and of Aristotle as well as in that of Hegel. A purely rational idealism, if it avoids dualism, does so at the expense of failing altogether to account for the individual and personal aspects of experience. Relations from the idealistic point of view are and remain universals, and of themselves they cannot supply the specific reference and the unique setting which an individual object or fact demands. The

[1] *Vid.* Dr. J. E. McTaggart's *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*, p. 25 ff.

body of relations supposed to constitute a 'thing' will not define for us *this* which is perceptually here from *that* which is there. Nor will it determine for us one specific member of a class apart from another. It is easy to show that an individual derives meaning and value from the relations into which it enters; but it is also easy to show that relations alone cannot give to it its unique setting in the scheme of existence. In the case of the conscious individual, we know that it is not conceptual thinking but feeling and interest which make him a unique centre of experience. And when we try to interpret so concrete and intricate a process as human history, it becomes exceedingly evident how inadequate are universal categories and principles for the task.

A vigorous endeavour has been made in recent years to hold aloft the banner of monistic idealism, by showing that it can be stated so as to meet this difficulty of the individual. I refer to Prof. Royce's Gifford Lectures on *The World and the Individual.* In working out his conception, Royce employs the analogy of a mathematical series which develops in accordance with a law, and possesses a definite character and direction. Each member in the series has its own unique place and meaning, and so is determined to be itself and nothing else. The Absolute may be conceived as a purposive Will, developing from itself a world of differences which are ideas and meanings, so that each element fits into its own unique place, fulfils its specific function, and represents the whole in a certain definite aspect. The point of Royce's contention is, that the reference to something independent and beyond itself which seems necessary to individualise a meaning—the *that* to which the *what* is referred—is only apparent. On closer examination the external meaning of an idea turns out to be its internal meaning fully developed or worked out. The something more in the object of an idea is simply due to the fact, that in the developmental process the idea has not attained the complete content of its own purpose, or what it

has in it to be. So what seems to be the other of the idea is, in the end, only the difference between its partial and its completed development.[1]

When all is said, however, this bold and thoughtful attempt to defend the solution of the problem of reality in terms of a monistic idealism leaves many difficulties unanswered. I shall refer afterwards to the point, whether the mind could develop the contrast of inward and outward, if the difference in consciousness were not based on an actual difference in fact. At present let us note that, though an element in an expanding series may be uniquely determined, this by no means shows how an idea as meaning can be identified with an individual object in concrete experience. Such an idea, instead of embracing reality within its own development, implies reality in some form as a condition of its development. The truth is ideas interpret but they do not constitute reality : they reveal meaning because they function within the context of existence which goes beyond them. In his use of the word 'idea,' Royce often seems to hypostatise it, and speaks as though ideas had a reality for themselves. But ideas can have no being outside the living minds whose activity they express. And the character of the individual mind or personal self gives it something more than a perfectly distinct place in an abstract scheme, namely a being for itself. This element in personality Royce's theory neglects. He has, of course, to accept the existence of a plurality of spirits or finite selves within his Absolute. But the essential drift of his logic and his conception of meaning is to show, that the reality of the individual lies beyond himself, and is only to be found in the whole which he represents in a certain determinate aspect. The true self of any individual man, we are told, is an ideal. The conclusion seems to be inevitable that individuality, or being for self, is appearance; the only real individual is the universal Will which realises and sustains the entire realm of meanings in the movement of

[1] *Op. cit.*, vol. i. pp. 329, 339, 534.

its own life. To follow out to its fulfilment the meaning of a self is to find its meaning become one with the principle of the Whole, and its reality identical with a specific self-expression of the Absolute. So the struggle to do justice to individuality ends in a frank capitulation to the claims of an all-embracing monism.

The inability of idealism of the Hegelian type, however skilfully restated, to do justice to the concrete facts of nature and history prompted the cry in Germany, "Back to Kant." And the desire to reconsider the whole question of the relation of knowledge and reality in the light of the Kantian criticism was a hopeful feature in the philosophic situation. But in order to decide how far philosophic deliverance was to be found by a return to Kant, let us go back for a little to Kant's epistemology. Some comments and criticism have already been passed on Kant's theory of knowledge, and our remarks now will be confined to one main point. That point is, whether Kant's theory of knowing so does justice to the variously qualified world of experience, that it can serve as a solid basis for metaphysical construction. If not, then the return to Kant will not suffice to meet the needs of the situation.

To begin with, Kant, it is clear, never committed himself to the opinion that the experienced world was entirely constituted by the form of thought. Behind the matter of sense-affection there was the "thing in itself," the thing as it is apart from the process by which it is known. Kant's opinions in regard to the "thing in itself" underwent change: at one point he appears to treat it as the positive ground of affections of sense; at another he speaks of it as a *Grenzbegriff*, or limiting conception, to which we can attach no positive predicates. In the latter aspect he commonly speaks of it as a *noumenon* or purely intelligible object, and, as students of Kant are aware, he supposes the *noumenon* to lie beyond the subject as well as the object of experience. This elusive 'somewhat,' which we can think but never know, is for Kant reality: in con-

trast to it the world of ordinary and scientific experience is merely phenomenal. And he finds the reality of the intelligible world guaranteed by the practical reason or will, which demands for its working the truth of this supra-empirical realm. In this way the claims of the religious or supramundane consciousness are legitimated. But if Kant is right, theoretical or speculative reason is of no positive value in religion, for the ideals of pure reason are void. Now Kant's conception of reality is the direct outcome of his theory of knowledge; if that theory is inadequate, then his way of reaching reality is involved in the defect of his premisses. Are the principles, then, of the Kantian epistemology sound? Note at the outset how entirely futile is Kant's conception of the "thing in itself." Its suggested presence behind the matter of sense enables Kant to deny that the object in representation is entirely constituted by the forms of knowledge. Yet this colourless abstraction does not explain anything in experience; on Kant's own showing no specific features of the object in presentation can be traced to it. There is a constant tendency in the *Critique*—and we venture to think it a wrong tendency—to oppose the form to the matter of knowledge, and to trace all the characteristic features of the experienced world to the activity of the formal elements involved in the unity of self-consciousness. So sensible quality in general depends on sense-affection in the subject; the spatial and temporal order is given through the forms of intuition; and the schematised categories account for the presence in experience of unities and pluralities, substances and causal connexions. The net result of the process is conveyed fairly in the dictum: "The understanding makes nature, though it does not create it."

In criticising Kant's theory of knowledge, in order to be brief I will run the risk of appearing dogmatic. (1) Experience does not begin, as Kant assumed, with a chaotic 'manifold of sense,' but with a feeling-continuum in which orderly differences are implicit: recent psychology may be taken to have established this. His initial

wrong assumption led Kant to overestimate the importance of formal synthesis. (2) Space and time can be understood if they are regarded as forms of order already involved in presentation, forms which representative consciousness further develops. They are unintelligible if they are treated as *a priori* forms of intuition read into a matter which is alien to them. The inherent difficulty of Kant's theory is apparent whenever we ask why the elements *A B C* should have the positions *a b c* in the temporal or spatial order rather than *c d e*. A pure form of intuition is powerless to determine this, and yet the form is useless if it does not do so. Nor is it open to Kant to say, that the "thing in itself" contains the reason of the locality of objects in space and time, for, *ex hypothesi*, it does not enter into space or time at all. (3) A like difficulty meets us when we ask how the categories come to determine concrete experience. The problem is to show how the category, or general form of thought, finds its specific embodiment in a concrete case. Kant evades rather than answers this question by making what he calls the "schematism of the categories" a work of the imagination operating unconsciously. Take the category of cause, which is schematised in the form of order in time. The statement that change follows a necessary order, which is termed causal dependence, may be true; but this general rule of itself does not help to make nature intelligible. The scientific organisation of nature is due to the establishment of specific connexions between elements, and the nature of the elements determines how and what the connexions are to be. Only experience has told us that oxygen and hydrogen in certain proportions go to form water, that water at 32 degrees Fahrenheit changes into ice, and at 212 degrees passes into steam. Our understanding of nature is bound up with our knowledge of such particular connexions. And it seems idle for the follower of Kant to say, that objects in virtue of the reference to self-consciousness which they involve, are determined to stand in some kind of causal relation to one

another, but the particular way will depend on the character of the objects themselves.

A determination to a relation in general is valueless, unless it is also a determination to a specific relation; and this, we have seen, depends on the character of the elements related, and is learned empirically. The mere principle that every event must have a cause, or that change must follow a necessary order in time, will not make experience coherent until we know what particular changes precede particular effects. There is a chasm between the general rule and the particular instance which Kant never bridged. Another illustration of Kant's inability to construe the concrete in experience through the formal activity of mind is supplied by his *Refutation of Idealism*. In the second edition of his *Critique* he sought to refute those who attributed to him an idealism like that of Berkeley. He tried to do so by showing that we cannot reduce all experience to inner experience, for outer experience is presupposed in the constitution of inner experience. It is through spatially determined, empirical objects or presentations that the mind can define by contrast a portion of its experience as inward. There is an element of truth in this view; but the way in which Kant works out the idea discloses the intrinsic difficulties of his own position. In his statements there is a recurring ambiguity between the conception of the object as a representation in consciousness and as something independent of consciousness or a "thing in itself." In other words, the phrase 'external to me' carries a double meaning in the *Refutation*, in the one case denoting independence of the subject, and in the other external representation for the subject. By means of this ambiguity Kant 'refutes' idealism, and at the same time maintains his theory that mind makes objects.[1] What

[1] Here and elsewhere the realistic implications of Kant's theory, if it is to work, are pointed out by Pritchard in his acute book on *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*. Dr. E. Caird, in his *Philosophy of Kant*, 2nd ed., 1889, characteristically tries to show that, in the *Refutation*, Kant was vaguely feeling his way to a more comprehensive idealism.

Kant fails to recognise is, that his nebulous "thing in itself" can never make the representation of an object *bene fundatum*; for a representation must always represent something, and that something cannot be an impalpable abstraction. It seems quite clear that it is only because the representation of an object in space implies a transsubjective reference, that outer experience acquires that distinctive character in virtue of which it is contrasted with inner experience.

This somewhat technical discussion will have been justified, if it has served to emphasise a fundamental weakness in the Kantian idealism. It is Kant's great merit to have shown how the orderly world of common experience implies a process of ideal construction; for objects are not mechanically impressed on the mind, but the mind is active in their apprehension. On the other hand, he failed to recognise that ideal construction would be meaningless were it not a process of interpretation. That the object in representation is relative to the mind is true, though a truism. But this does not prove the object we represent exists only in the mind; for the transsubjective reference of the represented object is as essential as the subjective. The whole trend of Kant's argument is to show that knowing is in a real sense a making of the object, and it is a process to which the 'thing in itself" contributes nothing essential. But the more closely this position is examined, the less tenable does it appear. Not even the so-called secondary qualities of body can be conceived to be the pure product of the experient subject. It has been truly said that a fact, like a particular colour, which is realised by this particular unity of consciousness, is also capable of being realised outside of it.[1] And the observation of Helmholz is perfectly just: "Blue is only a mode of sensation; but that we see blue in a definite direction at a given time, must have a reason in reality. At another time we see red there, and this reason in reality must have changed."[2]

[1] B. Varisco, *I Massimi Problemi*, p. 41.

[2] As quoted by Riehl, *Science and Metaphysics*, Eng. tr., 1894, p. 165.

The Kantian "thing in itself" is by its very conception unable to explain these features in the object of experience which cannot be due to the subject. We conclude, therefore, that relation to the mind means the relation of something, and what enters into relation must have an existence of its own. For relations are meaningless apart from a basis of relation. Our conviction, therefore, is that the Kantian epistemology greatly exaggerates the function of the form of knowledge, and thereby fails to account for patent facts of experience. So we come back to the old and well-tried belief of those who say, that the world of individual things has a being of its own. And if this be true, an inquiry into the nature of the being of the world will form the introduction to any attempt to determine its Ground.

B.—Individuality and Unity in Experience, and their Basis.

Whatever be the reality underlying the world of ordinary experience, it appears to us as a world of variously qualified objects or things which present numerous features of similarity and difference. And just as we speak of individual persons, we speak of individual things, meaning by that a certain group of qualities which persist in an object, and mark it off from its environment and other objects. So far all is plain; but further reflexion reminds us that there is something elusive in the notion of 'thing.' The use of the word in ordinary speech is sometimes arbitrary and not always consistent. We speak readily of an event as a thing, though we should hesitate to call the atmosphere a thing, for it is not here instead of there. A bit of coal is a thing, but the heat into which it is resolved is too intangible for the title: a stone on the road is a thing, but this character seems lost when it is built into a house. In common parlance, then, things change and seem to pass into something else. But if an object is truly individual, it cannot have and lose its individuality

in this arbitrary manner; it must maintain its qualities in some way, for this is essential to its distinctness. What enables a group of qualities to possess and sustain amid change this individual character? Evidently not the qualities as such, for in their nature these are general and may belong to other things as well. Colour, extension, solidity, for instance, are not the exclusive possession of any one object, and to apply them as predicates is not to individualise a thing. Nor can individuality be found in any hypothetical core or substratum which persists in its sameness or identity. For such a substratum under scrutiny resolves itself into an attribute, and, owing to the generality of every attribute, fails to define a thing as this particular thing. Moreover, a substratum, qualified by attributes and responding to their changes, would itself change, and could not persist in an abstract identity with itself. Owing to the difficulty of finding a basis for individuality some have concluded that, so far at least as the material world is concerned, individuals do not exist. That they seem to exist is due to an arbitrary and abstract way in which the ordinary mind regards the world. Yet this theory does not account for the appearance of individuality, and more especially in the case of organic types of being; so we must ask if there is not some better explanation.

It will be found, I think, that the difficulties in conceiving of individual existences are, to some extent at least, due to the material associations we bring with us. Of course an individual must have a reality of its own, but it does not follow that this reality is material. The so-called sensible qualities of matter are essentially statements in terms of an experient subject. They express the way in which the object affects the subject; and to suppose that a material object in experience is exactly the same thing outside experience is impossible. This is a kind of naïve realism which cannot be maintained. In these circumstances the line of thought opened out by Lotze appears to offer the best solution of the problem. It

sets out from the idea of a self and its qualities. The qualities belong to the self: they signify the states by which the self reveals its nature and maintains itself. The self is the spiritual bond which unifies all its states; it is present in each state, yet not identical with any one of them. An individual in the degree that it is a self is a centre of experience, distinguishing itself from other centres and maintaining itself in its changing states. If we find the analogy of the human self the key by which to interpret individuality, we shall conclude that a thing is individual in so far as it is a centre of experience, and connects and organises its own states.[1] Now, is there any reason for restricting individuality so understood to conscious centres of experience? The answer is that it is hard to defend such a limitation in the face of the principle of continuity. The conscious region is in closest relation to the subconscious: the two spheres pass into one another, and the marginal line is fluctuating and elusive. Below man the animal world, in its higher types at least, gives evidence of the possession of a psychical life which involves some degree of consciousness; and between the animal and the plant the line of distinction is purely artificial. Even the so-called inorganic cannot be alien to the organic, for it ministers to the life of organisms. The principle of continuity therefore suggests that the individual, as a centre of experience, has many stages, extending from low grade individuals whose reactions are of the simplest kind up to fully conscious selves. No doubt when we pass below the protozoa, or the most elementary types of life known to the biologist, it baffles us to say where what is individual begins and where it ends. And if we postulate simple monads, or centres of experience, as the most elementary individuals implied in

[1] Cassirer, whose able book, *Substanzbegriff und Functionsbegriff* is written from a Neo-Kantian standpoint, holds the notion of 'thing' is reducible to a permanent law connecting phenomena (p. 367). But the generality of the law makes it inadequate to express the individuality of the thing. A centre of experience is *ipso facto* individual, but a law is not.

the existence of the world of things, we admit there can be no direct verification, just as there is none of the scientific concepts of the atom and the electron. On the other hand, an hypothesis which cannot be directly verified is susceptible of verification in various degrees, according to the way in which it works or helps to make what is given in experience intelligible. The evidence for what transcends immediate experience and sense-perception will always be of this indirect character. We venture to think the conception of the simple monad or elementary individual, which, by combination with other monads, enters into successively higher types of being, offers a better key to the understanding of individuality than either Absolute Idealism or Natural Realism can supply. In the latter case it is not apparent how an individual centre of experience in any form should come into existence at all: and in the former we have merely the general schema of an individual instead of the living and concrete fact. The monad, on the contrary, is *ex hypothesi* individual, and furnishes the permanent centre of reference for its own changing states. Moreover, it opens out the way for the conception of complex or higher grade individuals, which are groups or systems of monads unified by a central or dominant monad. Whatever difficulties may attach to a theory of monads, that theory at all events tries to meet fairly the problem raised by the existence of individuality —a problem which is fundamental in metaphysics. In doing so it avoids the errors of formalism and crude realism, and it also enables us to understand how the subject and predicate relation is central both in knowledge and reality. For the knowing subject is a self which is the centre of its own experiences, and in the act of judging follows the analogy of its own being by relating predicates to a subject. On the other hand, the monadologist is not committed to the untenable theory, to which Kant gave currency, that the subject in the activity of judging actually constitutes objects. For the type of unity revealed in the cognitive life extends downwards, and a centre of experience with

its states is the truth which underlies the notion of an individual and its qualities. In other words, while the activity of judgment is determined in its form by the structure of self-consciousness, and all experienced objects must be construed in terms of this form, the experienced world by its intrinsic nature responds to this demand and is capable of being truly interpreted under these conditions. For the principle of individuality underlies the natural as well as the spiritual order.

But a new and important question must be faced at this stage. Are the many monads or reals originally independent of one another? and, if so, how do they come to be related to each other? Leibniz, to whom the conception of the monad is due, held, as is well known, that the monad evolved the whole wealth of its experience from within, in so doing accurately corresponding with the world outside, though never interacting with it. At first sight the conception seems intolerably artificial.[1] How a simple substance could be endowed with the potentiality of evolving the whole body of its experience from within, so as to be independent of any impressions from without, is a puzzle. Yet even in Leibniz's scheme the notion of mutual influence tends to reassert itself. His corresponding centres, though they do not interact with one another, are subject to determinations due to one another, through a third Being or principle, which is the sufficient-reason of their correspondence. In truth, a multitude of reals, entirely separate and indifferent to each other, could never be made to form a world; and the very notion of diversity implies unity.[2] If experience is to become possible there must be some *community* in the elements, by reason of which they affect one another and so develop experience

[1] This conception, seemingly so artificial, was not reached arbitrarily by Leibniz. He was led to it by his logical theory of the analytic identity of subject and predicate in true judgments; and also by the mathematical notion of a functional correspondence between variables.

[2] "There can be no experience of a plurality, whether of beings, qualities, or events, that are absolutely disparate and disconnected—that is certain." Ward, *The Realm of Ends*, 1911, p. 222.

in each other. This implies that the individual centres which thus act upon and respond to one another form part of a whole, and are determined in their several meanings and functions through the whole. In other words, that orderly and connected interaction of individuals, which means experience, implies that the individuals from the first form elements in a coherent order or system. Only on the assumption that there is already unity in reality can we understand a coherent experience developing within it. For order cannot be rooted in disorder, nor can unity be the outcome of chaos.

Having settled this point, let us consider more closely the nature and acting of the monads or centres of experience. They have been described as real, yet not material realities. They are substances in the sense that they possess identity, and unify their individual qualities or states. How is this to be interpreted psychically? for the monad is a psychical substance. Without doubt the basal element in psychical process, the element which underlies the development of feeling and thought, is will, or put more generally, conation. As we trace the life-process downwards to its rudimentary forms we find conative activity continuously present. It reveals itself in the reactions of the humblest organism; and these reactions are purposive, for they are life-conserving. The monad at its lowest is a conative unity, while the very fact that it is active points to something beyond itself with which it interacts. At this point let me try to meet an objection. Why, it may be said, posit a spiritual centre or substance at all? Is not the meaning of anything just its activity or way of acting? A so-called substance whose reality is absorbed in its activity is not properly a substance but a process or energy.[1] In reply it has to be said that substance, understood as a unity which maintains itself and distinguishes itself from other unities, appears to be a conception with which we are not able to dispense. We cannot conceive

[1] So, for example, Wundt contends. *Vid.* his *System der Philosophie*, 1889, pp. 290–291.

of activity without thinking of something which is active; and qualities, which are states or modes of energising, are referred to definite centres to which they belong, and do not fly to and fro *in vacuo*. Moreover, if a centre of experience is resolved entirely into modes of acting, there appears to be no room for its development as an individual. That which develops must have a nature of its own which it reveals in the process of developing, a character in virtue of which it maintains a continuity between the past and present. Interaction conditions development by supplying stimuli and evoking responses; but the individuality of the centres which interact is also a condition, otherwise the process could not elicit any growth of experience *in* individuals. Development then presupposes an inner nature or character in the centres which develop; and, on the other hand, growth in experience implies that, with this self-reference, there is a constant reference to that which is other than self; for it is through interaction with an environment that individuals evolve their functions and their meaning. This twofold relation, to self and to other-than-self, is essential to the individual. There is even a sense in which we may say with Lotze, that the more indifferent a thing is to its relations, the more does its actual condition at a given moment depend on them.[1]

The plurality of reals, which by their interaction form the basis of coherent experience, must be parts of an orderly whole; this we have already decided. But how do they come to interact with one another? and what is the explanation of the consistent system of connexions which they form among themselves? As the problem of the relation of the One and Many this question has haunted the history of philosophy; and in the form in which it is here stated it offers a hard subject for metaphysical thinking. Our treatment of the matter will be best confined at present to the statement of some general principles: in a note at the end of the chapter I have entered a little more fully into the perplexing theme of

[1] *Kleine Schriften*, vol. i. p. 135.

interaction. At the stage reached so much is clear: if among a body of co-existing elements, change in definite individuals calls forth corresponding changes in certain other individuals, there must be a responsive sympathy between them. If in the case of individuals $a\ b\ c$ and $x\ y\ z$ the change of a into a' is balanced by the corresponding change of x into x' while y and z remain indifferent; if, similarly, the passing of b into b' evokes a movement of y to y', while x and z remain unaffected; and if, further, these movements represent a uniform way of acting in the elements concerned: it must follow that these corresponding changes are based on an affinity between the individuals by reason of which they are mutually susceptible in this particular way. For the nature of the interaction depends on the nature of the things which interact. Moreover, the fact that certain individuals are neutral to one another in a determinate situation M, is ultimately founded on *positive* characteristics which ensure neutrality in that situation. And these characteristics go to explain why, when the situation M changes to N, the formerly indifferent elements are now reciprocally affected. Since no elements are so isolated from each other that they are incapable of affecting one another in any aspect, or of interacting in any situation, the responsive affinity must pervade the whole plurality of individuals. Lotze and Prof. James Ward have termed this affinity or mutual susceptibility between individuals 'sympathetic rapport'; and the phrase is a good description if not an explanation. Sympathetic rapport between the elements of the world is, then, the condition of that uniform and orderly process of interaction which is at work in the development of life and of conscious experience.

Is this sympathetic relationship an ultimate fact founded in the nature of the elements which interact? or must we go beyond the elements for its explanation? It is obvious, I think, that affinity presupposes unity of some kind; and unity, it has already been argued, cannot be the product of elements which are inherently disparate and

isolated. And it is *primâ facie* apparent, that elements taken individually cannot yield the ground of their sympathetic interaction, for the very idea of sympathy is rooted in relation to others. The sympathies of the individual depend on his nature, and that nature has been developed through membership in a social whole. There is truth in the Aristotelian principle that the whole is prior to its parts, and this principle bears on the problem before us. So the affinities of the individual elements of reality can only be explained through the system which determines their place and their relations to one another. Sympathetic interaction of individuals means that these individuals belong to a whole, and while there is distinction there has never been isolation. Immanent in each individual, and binding each to each and each to all, is a unifying principle which constitutes the whole a system of responsive parts. In this whole neither the unity nor the plurality can be sacrificed. If unity is made to absorb and annul plurality, interaction becomes an illusory appearance, for there are no individuals to interact. If plurality is fundamental and absolute, it is impossible to understand how interaction could come into existence at all. Nevertheless it does not follow that, though there must be a principle of unity continuously present in the whole system of elements and immanent in each element, this principle does not have its ultimate source and explanation above and beyond the system itself. There may be reasons for holding that the interacting system as a One in Many is not an ultimate fact, but has its final ground in a transcendent Reality. These reasons, if they exist, will be found in the character of the system itself. We shall be in a better position to draw a conclusion after we have considered the nature and meaning of the experience which is developed within the interacting whole.

Our argument has gone to show that the plurality of things forms a unity in which order is immanent. The elements of reality are in such a condition of relatedness that the mind's demand for continuity is met by the

constitution of the objective world, and reason within finds rationality without. In the manner of their co-existence and connexion with one another, and in the changes of their inner states, the monads or centres of experience exhibit the rudimentary conditions on the basis of which thought elaborates the conception of a world enclosed by the continuous wholes of space and time. That individuals originally co-exist with one another is the basis on which developing experience, passing through the perceptual to the conceptual stage, finally construes them under the generalised form of a spatial order where things occupy place. The notion of succession is based on the fact of change, and apart from changing states there could not be psychical experience. Time, as we think of it, is a developed product of conceptual thinking, which has been elaborated through and is measured by spatial images. In a more elementary form it is given in the simple consciousness of duration, or the feeling of continuance in a process.[1] But this consciousness of duration would not be possible apart from the consciousness of change, which is primary. The fact of change cannot be derived from, nor explained by, any formal or general conception of time, though the form of time may be explained as a development on the basis of reality which changes. Space and time as forms of order are not read by the mind into experience, but are the development of an order immanent in experience from the first. In general, one would conclude that, if there is an immanent order pervading the elements of reality, this determination of parts through the whole is teleological. The unity in the plurality of the monads is the unity of a system teleologically organised; but in the case of the lower centres of experience this finalism is intrinsic or subconscious.

The unifying principle of things, as we have before remarked, will be best determined when we keep in view

[1] It is a central feature of Bergson's philosophy to distinguish and to contrast the simple and immediate consciousness of duration (*durée*) with the spatially developed concept of time.

the characteristic way in which experience has developed. From this standpoint the true nature of individuals appears in better relief. To some features of this development attention has been directed in the chapter dealing with the Theory of Knowledge. Experience, let us repeat, is a continuous growth, beginning with pure sentience, and advancing through perceptual consciousness to conceptual thinking. At the final stage, thought, matured through language and intersubjective intercourse, liberates itself from bondage to what is immediately given, and reads a universal meaning into experience. Mediate thinking is self-conscious and universal, and brings into being that common world which civilised minds share, and in which they are at home. Not until the subject of experience can universalise by means of the concept does it become self-conscious in the full sense of the word, and only with the advent of self-consciousness does the objective world assume the form of an ordered whole in space and time. The two sides of experience evolve *pari passu*. The essential condition of conceptual experience, so impressive in its range and so significant in its results, is intersubjective intercourse: the commerce of minds is the spring of mental progress.

The concept gives a relative fixity to experienced objects, and makes it possible for the mind to deal reflectively with them. Some thinkers—Wundt, for example[1]—believe the character of permanence and individuality ascribed to things to be solely the result of conceptual thinking. Generalised thought gives a unity and fixity to objects which they do not possess in themselves. The conclusive reason against this conceptual idealism is, that a transsubjective element is implied in the whole evolution of experience. Interacting minds, however great their potentialities, cannot by generalising their experiences create a common world for themselves. For this process presupposes the existence of the common world in which they meet and interact. In order that the multiplicity of rational subjects may recognise one another, and

[1] *Vid.* p. 287.

work in agreement with each other, they must meet in a common environment, an environment which is not the peculiar property of any of them. This environment supplies the medium through which one mind can act upon another by means of the symbolism of language. Self-conscious mind gives us a world at a higher level of development; but it has itself developed, and presupposes reality at a lower stage of evolution. The unity of self-consciousness is the highest type of unity, but it supervenes on an organic structure which is a unity of a lower grade; and as we trace the process downward, we always find that a unity of a higher order emerges on the basis of a pre-existing unity. Even the simplest centres of experience—the bare monads as Leibniz termed them—reveal an internal unity and coherency among themselves; and if we have to postulate being beyond them, it would be a continuum and not a chaos.

In asking, then, for the Ground of the experienced world, we must remember we are seeking the explanation of a graduated development which proceeds from the simplest forms of unity to forms more and more complex. In man, the ripe outcome of the movement, individuality has blossomed into personality; and personality means the possession of an ethical will, of a character which is the expression of spiritual interests, motives, and ends. Experience, then, is a matter of many phases and stages, and he who inquires after its Ground must remember this. The higher stages have to be kept in view as well as the lower, and the principle of explanation advanced should do justice to both. It is futile, for instance, to put forward an Ultimate Ground, which is relevant merely to the conception of nature as a mechanical system, but neither explains, nor even leaves room for, the emergence within the system of spirits self-conscious, reflective, and free. For this reason, if for no other, the materialistic solution must be pronounced impossible. The very notion of matter, in the materialistic sense, is an unsupported hypothesis, and, instead of explaining mind, presupposes mind.

But while the inherent difficulties of materialism preclude the theory of a material ground of the universe, there are some who, though not professing themselves materialists, are reluctant to look beyond the world-system for its explanation. The universe, they say, is a totality in space and time which is self-sufficient and self-explaining, neither coming into being nor passing away. To this it must be objected, that the experienced world in space and time is not a static whole which is its own ultimate reason: it is a process of development. In this development, as we have contended, the individual unities at every stage of evolution point to conditions beyond themselves, conditions which make possible their interaction and growth. Even at the lowest grade of conative individuals orderly interaction, which means experience, takes place within a unity or interconnected whole, and this has to be explained. What, then, is the ground of this unity and order in beings which are at root spiritual?

Any theory framed to answer this problem must make use of the principle of analogy, for only by the help of what is given in experience can we formulate a conception of the Ground of Experience. The important point is that the use of analogy should be intelligible and defensible. Now we do find forms of unity in experience which reveal a principle that may be extended analogically to the ground of the world. The type of unity manifested in psychical process, in the forms of life, and in the most rudimentary individuals, is conative unity. In every organism the active principle brings about an order and connexion of parts and processes, so that each and all co-operate to realise a final purpose or end. Within the world this active principle or Will brings into being and sustains those interacting systems which we call organisms. That conation, operative in the simplest individuals, successively builds up higher and more complex types of unity within the experienced world, is a highly significant fact. If Will be taken to cover all forms of conation, then Will thus broadly conceived is the unifying principle

of experience. And if Will is the basis of life, it is likewise the active principle which co-ordinates and unites the interacting elements of the organism. But if Will can build the elements of reality into those more and more complex systems which mark the evolution of life, it is plausible to suppose that a Supreme Will conferred their initial unity on the interacting monads or centres of experience themselves. On this theory the Supreme Will, which is the fundamental principle of unity or synthesis behind experience, is reproduced in type in those living systems that appear within experience. The latter depend upon and are made possible by the more comprehensive unity or synthesis revealed in the order of existence. Reduced to its lowest terms this order consists of simple monads interacting within a common medium or environment, the whole forming a system of which an ultimate Will is the ever present Ground.[1]

Is the final principle of unity in the universe bare Will and nothing more? Or must it be conceived as conscious and self-conscious Will? To make this further postulate means, it has been said, that our use of analogy becomes illegitimate. Self-consciousness involves the contrast of the not-self, and it carries with it limitations which cannot apply to the Supreme Principle of things: an ultimate Will must be unconscious and impersonal, if it is to function as a universal principle of unity immanent in the world. On this pretext E. von Hartmann advocates what he calls the 'concrete monism' of the unconscious. And it may be frankly admitted that, by making the Absolute unconscious, the pantheistic monist gets quit of the awkward task of explaining how one self-consciousness can be in or a part of another. But you only evade one difficulty in this way at the expense of creating another and a more serious one: you require to explain how out

[1] The suggestion that there is a continuous medium in which monads interact, I have not sought to explain or defend in the chapter. Some remarks on the subject will be found in the note on "The Problem of Interaction."

of unconscious elements a self-conscious being can develop. And how the unconscious can prove the sufficient reason of the conscious, is really inexplicable. To account for the higher stages of a development through the lower, is a time-worn problem which has never been solved. Teleologists, from Aristotle downwards, have insisted that the thing cannot be done, for even in the working of the lower the higher is presupposed. But, it will be replied, the matter is not to be settled in this ready fashion, since the argument is really an argument *ex ignorantia*. It is true we do not know *how* lower elements can evolve self-consciousness; but reality is not measured by our understanding, and it does not follow that what we cannot explain is impossible. In answer we say we cannot prove the thing to be impossible, but so far as our knowledge goes it seems to be highly improbable. No doubt in the case of a human life we see a development from mere conation and feeling to reason and self-consciousness. Yet this development is so far explained by the fact that it originally proceeded from self-conscious beings, and was stimulated by the presence of active minds in the environment. Consequently the process cannot be taken to show that the unconscious is able of itself to generate the self-conscious. Nor again is there any real explanation in the theory that consciousness is a biological development produced by the needs of the organism in the struggle for existence. It is true, of course, that, if an organic being is to rise to a higher level of existence, it is its interest to develop consciousness; for consciousness opens out possibilities of progress which are closed to mere instinct. But the fact that there comes a point in the evolution of organisms where the advent of consciousness would prove a distinct advantage, is by no means a sufficient reason of its development. For consciousness could only issue from that which was capable of evolving it, and it is this capacity in bare conation which is not intelligible. Nor does it help to speak of consciousness as a kind of upward leap impelled by a "primordial life-impulse."

This would be more plausible if the advent of thought wore the appearance of an accident, and was suddenly evoked to meet some fresh evolutionary emergency. The facts are against this supposition: every stage in the evolution of experience was prepared for by that which went before, and the higher has only gradually emerged from the lower. On the other hand, if we suppose the Will, which is the ground of the whole body of experience, to be self-conscious, the process of evolution becomes more reasonable and intelligible. We do not then need to take refuge in the assumption that the lower out of its own resources can create the higher, for the activity of self-consciousness has been present in the elements of experience from the first. That growing complexity and intimacy of interaction which mark the advance of psychical process would have a sufficient reason in the self-conscious Will which is the active ground of the elements and of their unity. And the appearance of self-consciousness at the summit of the development would signify and reveal the nature of the source of the whole process. The total movement on this view is teleological, for each successive step is in the line of the goal, and the end was prepared for in the beginning. If we reject this theory in favour of the idea that self-consciousness is a product of lower elements, it cannot be on the plea that there is evidence for the hypothesis, or that it is intelligible in itself. It must rather be on the ground that what we cannot prove to be false may somehow be true; surely a highly hazardous line of argument! If I may borrow an illustration, it is as hard to conceive a blind and unconscious Will creating the world of meanings in which the self-conscious mind moves, as it is to suppose that a casual mingling of the letters of the alphabet could evolve a connected and rational discourse.

If we conclude that the World-Ground is a self-conscious Will, it follows that it is not to be conceived as a purely immanent principle. For there is a principle of distinction in a self-conscious mind, in virtue of which

it belongs to itself and is not merely a part of another self. Those who term the all-inclusive unity of experience a personal Absolute never succeed in reconciling the Absolute Self with the multiplicity of finite selves. The form of Absolutism which reduces all reality to a single individual Being is confronted with an insoluble difficulty: either the Absolute Self is real and finite selves are an illusion, or finite selves are real and the Absolute Self is a fiction. This is the dilemma of Absolute Idealism to which I have already referred. It can only be avoided by abandoning the theory that all experience falls within the unity of the Absolute Consciousness, in other words, by admitting that finite selves have a being of their own. Hence it is necessary for us to be clear what we mean by saying that the Ultimate Ground unifies the elements of experience. The Ground must unify without thereby becoming identical with or being absorbed by the elements unified. This means that God gives unity or system to the plurality of spiritual substances or experient centres, though he is not himself the unity in which they subsist. But he is the Ground of their unity, its source and final explanation. Pluralism, it should be noted, on this view is not ultimate; for the multiplicity of finite centres all depend for their existence and their order on one supreme teleological Will. Finite selves and the mundane system in which they develop are all sustained by God, who, by reason of his transcendent character, does not reduce the beings who depend on him to a phase of his own life. Pluralism in this way yields to a derivative system based on the divine activity, which operates through all its parts. A Ground which actively conditions experience in this manner may be truly said to unify it, for it brings about in all the parts a reference to one Source and a direction to one End. But while God, the Ultimate Ground, is active within the system of the world, he exists beyond it. He is transcendent as well as immanent, a Self and yet the sufficient reason of the society of selves.

C.—Personality and the Claims of Religious Experience.

The second form of regress was from the world of values to the Ground or Principle on which they depend. It is hardly necessary to repeat that this line of thought is dominant in the religious spirit, for values express the manner in which it habitually regards the world. But though the realm of values contrasts with that of facts, the two are interwoven in experience; and both are embraced in the system of ends. The previous discussions ought to have shown with sufficient clearness the function and importance of values in the religious life. At present I shall try to state concisely the bearing of the spiritual values on the Ground of experience, and their right to influence our conception of it.

Let me begin by recalling our previous analysis of value. Conative activity expresses itself in terms of feeling-consciousness; and at the simpler stages of psychical life where intellection is undeveloped, feelings regarded as satisfactions figure as value-feelings. At a higher stage of psychical development, where thinking plays a part, value-feelings appear as value-ideas or judgments: these, though based on feeling, possess a general character and meaning in relation to the experience of the subject. The inner development of the subject carries with it the development of values; and it has the effect of purifying their content and extending their scope and significance. The self-conscious and reflecting subject, through its attitude to life and the world, becomes the centre of a more or less complex system of value-judgments. Man at this level is personal, not merely individual — a being 'of large discourse' looking before and after. One can hardly overestimate the importance of that progressive movement which has gradually transformed individuality into personality. The former is the initial basis of the latter: to use a figure, the individual is the root of which the person is the

full growth and flower. Interaction is the constant condition of development; and it is the interaction of individuals in a social system which has gradually built up that civilised life of which ethical personality is the ripe outcome. The savage is individual merely, only the civilised man is fully personal. Largeness of outlook, variety of motives, organisation of conduct by reference to far-reaching ends, are features of personality. The distinctive character of the personal life, therefore, is its spiritual and ethical content: in virtue of this character the world and experience have a wider and deeper meaning for the person. The momentary impulses and the material motives which rule the lower man are now transformed into ethical and spiritual interests which inspire conduct as a whole. Actions are regarded from the point of view of duty or ethical obligation, and life itself is conceived to be a spiritual vocation. Behind the conception of particular duties and of personal vocation lies the idea of an ethical end which the person must strive to realise, and by reference to which he must organise his conduct. The notion of ethical end is completed by the notion of a religious ideal which expresses the ultimate goal of personal life. It is through his spiritual value-experiences that man comes to the consciousness of his spiritual end, and the end in turn enables him to define and systematise his ideas of value. These value-ideas enter into the very spirit and movement of the religious consciousness, and they express certain demands which the religious mind makes on the existing world. The value-judgments of religion may be regarded in a double aspect: (*a*) in relation to God, and (*b*) in relation to the world.

(*a*) While the religious consciousness always affirms the existence of the object of its faith, it never rests in the bare affirmation of existence. In and with the assertion of existence there goes the assertion of value; and only in virtue of the value which is conceived to belong to it does the object possess a religious significance. The

value of which God is the embodiment to his worshipper is a demand made by the spiritual life of the latter in response to its inner needs: it is claimed, not deduced; it is a postulate, not an inference. The postulate is not susceptible of a strict and direct proof; its justification lies in the meaning and connexion it gives to the normal facts of religious experience, and in the way it ministers to man's spiritual self-fulfilment.

In asking more particularly about the nature of this demand we are entitled to take religion in its highest and most developed form, because it is not in its lowly beginnings but in its ripe result that the religious spirit is best revealed. Now the values of higher religion are essentially ethical and spiritual, and the higher religious consciousness postulates an ethical and spiritual God. For man seeks in God the completion and fulfilment of the good he is struggling to realise in his own life. 'The ethical values of experience would lack meaning and coherency were they not connected and unified by a supreme Value. No doubt from the purely mundane point of view it is not possible to give a satisfying and consistent definition of the supreme Value; for an ethical ideal, if it is to be absolute, cannot be adequately stated in terms of human relationships. But it is just here that religion, with its reference to the transcendent world, completes and perfects the ethical idea of Good. By an act of faith the religious mind passes beyond the region of mundane relations and partial values, and posits the ground and consummation of all values in an Eternal Value. The Absolute Good is not a formal ideal, but a self-conscious Spirit who perfectly realises in himself the good which men realise only in a partial and fragmentary fashion. Religion solves the moral problem by transforming the life of endless endeavour and aspiration into that of personal fellowship with the perfect Good. The moral ideal which man fails to achieve for himself is won in the form of a spiritual good realised in communion with the divine Source of all Good. This postulate of a Supreme and Divine Good is

not arbitrary: it is the outcome of man's deeper needs, and is implied in the harmonious organisation of the ethical and religious life. The essential fact about the mundane life and its relationships is, that it neither is nor can be made complete and satisfying. The soul is greater than its temporal environment and can never be filled by it, for "man shall not live by bread alone." This inner insufficiency of earthly goods impels the religious spirit to go beyond the world and seek its goal in a transcendent Good. Hence the need and the demand for a spiritual God in and through whom the soul can find completion and harmony. It would indeed be a mystery, if not a contradiction, that beings should develop in time who continuously make these demands, if the demands are quite mistaken and are doomed to receive no satisfaction.

(*b*) Let us now consider the bearing of the religious postulate on the world of experience, and the way in which it works there. I have already suggested the important office performed by the idea of an ethical and spiritual God in giving unity and coherence to the values of the moral and religious life. Consistency and harmony in our valuations, as well as due gradation of values, can only be secured by the acceptance of an ultimate value; and on the reality of this ultimate value the validity of the whole system depends. Value is only a living fact in the experience of a self-conscious mind, and a supreme and ultimate value, if it is to be real, must be an absolute and self-conscious ethical Spirit. The realm of values is the realm of persons: impersonal substances cannot acquire value, or become goods, except through relation to personal spirits. The postulate therefore of God as the supreme ethical Person gives the desired guarantee for the objectivity of the religious values. And the notion of God as teleological ground of experience is necessary if existence and value are to be harmonised, and the rule of the good in the universe is to be assured. Were the final Ground of things a non-moral Being, there could be no assurance

that the ethical ends and the religious ideals of humanity were not doomed to failure and defeat. The religious idea of God, who is a self-conscious and an ethical Spirit, is a pledge that the teleological principle which is essential to the meaning and order of the personal life has a wider range, and governs the development of the whole world. A God who is good must secure the predominance of good in his universe. Were the universe hostile or intractable to the realisation of ethical ends, humanity could have no confidence in the possibility of working out its spiritual vocation. For the close of all endeavour might well be final defeat at the hands of lower forces. Hence the conception of a divinely-ordered system of things made subordinate to ethical ends is of high worth to the life of religious individuals. It delivers them from the fear of an alien universe, and gives them courage and confidence to fulfil their vocation: it enables them to act in the hope that "all things work together for good," and to live and strive in "the full assurance of faith." The religious man who knows that his highest interest and truest self-fulfilment is to realise the good, would feel himself like an outcast in a foreign land were he compelled to believe that the Ground of all things is a Being morally indifferent. For ethical and religious ends have to be worked out in a material and temporal environment; and nothing less than the assurance that natural and spiritual values are systematised and directed by Divine Goodness can satisfy the needs and meet the aspirations of the religious soul. The human pilgrim striving in the upward way wins new courage and confidence when he knows, with a certainty which casts out doubt, that the good within him is met by a wider Goodness, and the higher values cannot suffer ultimate loss or final defeat. At the heart of religion and morality, it has been truly said, is the feeling that the existence and development of the world is not an indifferent matter, but is designed to realise a highest Good.[1]

[1] Siebeck, *Ueber Freiheit, Entwicklung und Vorsehung*, 1911, p. 45.

It is not, I think, possible to found a solid and convincing argument for the moral character of the World-Ground on the observed facts of nature or history taken by themselves. Evils are everywhere present in nature, and sin abounds in human society; and even though it were possible to show that the good preponderated by an empirical study of the facts, still any inference from this would require to be balanced and qualified by the existence of the opposite. Keeping strictly to this kind of empirical proof, we should just as much be entitled to conclude that, if the good in the world presupposes an element of good in God, the existence of evil presupposes an element of evil in the divine nature. The inference that God must be perfectly good would fail, were it based merely on the observed facts of human experience. The argument here offered is confessedly not demonstrative; it is only a 'probable argument,' but it is free from the defect just noted. In substance it founds, not on bare facts, but on the needs and demands of the spiritual consciousness. The postulate of the religious spirit is, that the Supreme Existence is also the Supreme Value; and in virtue of this postulate the self is able to develop its spiritual nature and to reach forward to its fulfilment. The postulate is necessary to the meaning of the religious life, and justifies itself by the way it works in religious experience. On the strength, then, of the wants and the claims of the religious consciousness we affirm the ethical character of the World-Ground. If ethical predicates cannot rightly be applied to the Ultimate Reality, then the whole spirit and tendency of the religious life in man is mistaken and is out of harmony with the universe in which it develops. This conclusion we cannot accept, because we have as much right to claim that the universe should not be spiritually incoherent as that it should not be irrational. The argument is not direct, yet its weight should not be undervalued.

The idea of God postulated by the religious mind has now to be brought into closer relation with the meta-

physical conception of the World-Ground. The second determination is more formal, the first more concrete and spiritual. The two conceptions define reality in different aspects, but they are capable of being connected. Indeed it is apparent that the two lines of regress—the metaphysical and the ethical—do not run steadily apart, but converge towards a common goal. In the one case as in the other we are carried beyond the world-system in space and time into the transcendent sphere: on the one side we affirm a transcendent Reality, and on the other a transcendent Good. In the case of the ultimately Real we were led to define it as Will, and more precisely as self-conscious Will; while in the case of the ultimate Good we concluded that it could only be true and self-subsistent in a Personal Being. In both instances the Ultimate Ground is conceived by the help of analogy, and it could not be otherwise; but the analogy is not used uncritically, and the divine transcendence is emphasised. In other words, there is the recognition that self-conscious will and ethical character in God have a reality and a significance beyond that of their mundane counterparts. God, the Ultimate Ground, is the living unity of existence and value; and this unity is revealed in his teleological activity which embraces the world of facts in a realm of ends. The process of human evolution shows how the order of nature has been made to subserve the development of the ideal values. Experience is a complex process which begins in the barest individuality and moves slowly upward to ethical personality: it is a development in the line of a growing good. The purposive working of individuals within the world-system, which ministers to progress, is constantly conditioned by the all-embracing purposive action of the Ground upon which all centres of experience depend.

In discussing the relation of rationality to value, we realised that it was not possible to demonstrate that they were ultimately identical. Yet a radical discrepancy between them was impossible, for they were comprehended by, and functioned as factors in, the unity of personal life.

They were continuously co-operating elements in the purposive life of man. In the present instance factual experience has led us back to a transcendent Being, and value-experience to a transcendent Good, and we are likewise unable to deduce speculatively the one idea from the other. But here again in the conception of a Supreme Person the two ideas are brought into a living and harmonious unity. God, the Ground of the World, is the Supreme Will on whom the whole realm of facts and values depends, and who is himself the final consummation of reality and goodness. Facts and values are harmonised in the personal activity of man, and it is in personality that the solution of the problem must be found. In God as self-conscious Will reality and value interpenetrate, and they are harmoniously interwoven in the teleological structure of his universe. Because the world is a divine Realm of Ends, facts and values come together in a coherent whole of experience. The issue of the train of thought we have been developing is in accord with the principle of Leibniz, that the teleological character of the universe has its sufficient reason in the nature of God, who is an absolute and an ethical Being.

D.—Developing Experience and the World-Ground.

At this point our inquiry might seem to have reached its natural close. But there are still some matters which deserve consideration. More especially, and in view of recent discussions, it will be well to examine a little more fully a problem which the older metaphysicians passed somewhat lightly by. I mean the relation of God, the Ultimate Ground, to experience regarded as a constantly developing process. It has been common enough to speak of the experienced world as if it were a definite and determinate whole given in its totality. Yet this familiar form of statement does not accurately express the truth, and it may easily mislead. Existence in the form of a comprehensive and completed system is certainly never given to

us in experience, and reality is never known by us save in a broken and partial fashion. Moreover, the fact is patent that experience, as human history, is in a constant process of becoming, and its goal is out of sight. Knowledge is steadily growing, but ever as it grows new fields to be known are opening out before the eyes, and the settlement of one problem means the emergence of another. It would seem, therefore, to be a mistake for a philosopher to take experience for a static whole, forgetting the constant movement in which it is involved. No ingenuity, one would think, can convert what is in process into something which is already finished. Nevertheless metaphysicians, eager for finality of system, have sought to overcome this difficulty by declaring the movement in time to be a mere appearance, while reality itself is eternal and unchangeable. Time is only a kind of moving show, and the all-inclusive Absolute is beyond time and change. Students of the history of thought will remember how this idea has dominated Hindu philosophy; and in modern times it reappears in the systems of Spinoza and Hegel. This line of speculation is governed by the thought that the mind, when it surveys the process of development in time, occupies a lower and quite inadequate standpoint. To see things in their truth it must see them *sub specie æternitatis*; and then the succession in time is recognised to be an appearance, while reality is eternally complete and has no before and after. The outcome of this way of thinking is to give us, in place of the living, changing, and developing universe, what the late Professor James has strikingly called a 'block universe.' A universe thus rigid, fixed, and eternally complete in itself would be utterly uninteresting; and it is not evident how, regarded from any point of view, it should wear the appearance of change. Those who deny any reality to time forget that, though our developed idea of time is a conceptual product elaborated by reference to space-representation, the notion of time grows out of actual psychical experiences of change and duration; and these cannot be fictitious if the psychical process itself is to be

real. The very judgment that the universe is changeless involves the fact of mental change. Moreover, only if the time-idea has a ground in reality can the values of the historic life be maintained and defended. For if time is an illusion, history, which is meaningless apart from time, becomes an unsubstantial pageant. A powerful argument against the reduction of reality to a timelessly perfect whole can be drawn from the facts of the moral consciousness. The very form and structure of the ethical life imply the existence of ends to be realised, ends which it takes time to realise. The character of the ethical spirit is not compatible with the existence of actual perfection, for ethics sets men tasks, a thing which would be futile and unnecessary if existence were already perfect.[1] The realm of ends and the call to progress are too intimately bound up with the practical and moral consciousness to be eliminated from the real world: if this be so, time cannot be an illusion.

If the fact of development be accepted as real, in what relation does the process stand to the World-Ground? Certainly the Ground must be the presupposition and condition of any developmental movement within the world; for, apart from the Ground, the basis and the possibility of development would not exist. But the question may be put, whether the Ground which conditions development likewise determines every feature and fact within the process. Does the movement work itself out in all its details under unbending law, so that the truth of seeming contingency is real necessity? The answer will depend on whether the spontaneity which appears to be most conspicuous in developed centres of experience is a real or only an apparent spontaneity. If we hold, as I think we have grounds for doing, that the experience of spontaneity is not intelligible on the assumption that it is fictitious, then we must admit the possibility of movements and new beginnings within the evolution of life which do

[1] As Höffding has remarked, if existence were complete, harmonious, and unchangeable, Ethics would not be possible. *Phil. Probleme*, p. 82.

not proceed inflexibly from pre-existing conditions. To those who plead for determinate connexion in the interests of scientific explanation, we can point out how serious the difficulties are in carrying out the principle they advocate. For the principle of mechanical connexion rests on the idea of an ultimate equivalence between what goes before and what comes after in the developmental process. But this conception of quantitative equivalence is strictly applicable only to the interactions of a mechanical system in which the movements are reversible. You are dealing here with a principle which does not work perfectly in experience, except where the situation is artificially simplified, as in the case of a problem in pure mechanics. In the domain of organic or spiritual evolution this simplicity is absent, and the processes involved are never reversible. There is no quantitative equivalence between the animal body and the elements out of which it is formed; and if the body develops out of its elements, it does not develop back into them. A true development, on the contrary, reveals a real or creative synthesis, so that the product discloses new properties which are not to be found in the pre-existing elements.[1] And when we pass from life to mind, the constructive or creative character of the synthesis is still more transparent, and no explanation through the scientific category of cause and effect wears the semblance of probability. Even the most strenuous upholder of mechanical causality has to admit there are points where his method fails, as, for instance, in the transition from quantitative relations to qualitative differences, or from physiological processes to psychical states. He takes refuge here in the plea of ignorance, but the real source of failure is the inadequate and abstract character of the mechanical principles with which he is working. Development is creative, not the mere effect of what has gone before: to try to explain it as such an effect is radically to misconceive its nature. "By this process at every stage 'objects of a

[1] The significance of this fact has been emphasised by Lotze, Wundt, Professor J. Ward, and Professor Boutroux.

higher order,' as they have been happily termed, are attained; and these in turn may serve as the constituents of a new synthesis."[1]

It may, however, be said that, though it is impossible to explain scientifically the higher through the lower, still the process may be merely one of making *explicit* what is *implicit* from the first. Or, as Leibniz and some eighteenth century writers held, the developed organism was 'preformed' in the germ. The test of a theory is its power to explain; but there is little real insight gained into the process of development by this procedure of reflexion in doubling existence by carrying the result back into the beginning. We are no nearer understanding development by saying it proceeds from what is 'implicit,' so long as we cannot tell what the 'implicit' actually is. Of course it is true to say that the elements in an animal embryo must have a character and disposition which ensure that the process of growth, in its stages and result, will have a certain typical character. Nevertheless, to say this is not to say that every detail in the development is predetermined: and recent biology favours the idea that there are changes due to spontaneous variations or mutations. If this is true of organic evolution, it is still more apparent in historic development, where the interacting factors are self-conscious, spiritual beings. To affirm, as Hegel did, that the whole wealth of historic development is potential in the beginnings of mind, is a statement which it would be impossible to justify historically.[2] The lesson of history is rather that at certain times men of genius initiate new movements which, though related to the past, are not explained by it. It is true, indeed, that subsequent reflexion shows these new movements were prepared for, and so made possible, by foregoing history and by the situation at the time. But there are various possibilities contained in a given historic situation; and even though the course of events had—within limits no doubt—been different, one

[1] Professor J. Ward, *The Realm of Ends*, p. 105.
[2] *Phil. der Geschichte*, ed. 1848, p. 23.

would still have been able to show a continuity with what had gone before. The philosophic historian would simply have set a somewhat modified valuation on the factors present in the process. The philosophic interpretation of history is compatible with a degree of spontaneity in the active centres of experience.

How far then, it may be asked, can the development of experience be regarded as controlled by its Ground? Not absolutely, it is plain, so long as the centres of experience have a being for themselves and are endowed with spontaneity in varying degrees. The presence of these features is not consistent with the reduction of all finite wills to precisely determined expressions of the Ultimate Will. A rigid predestinarianism exalts the divine Sovereignty by making human freedom an empty name. Nevertheless, if experience is to have an ethical meaning, it cannot be ruled by caprice, chance, or arbitrary will. Freedom in the many must be conditioned and limited by their relation to their common Ground; and the teleological character of the whole process must be maintained, if its spiritual value is to be conserved. In two directions the freedom of centres of experience will be subject to limiting conditions. Spontaneity is conditioned by the more general fact of dependence, for all interacting centres constantly depend on the Ultimate Ground: consequently spontaneity will always be exercised within the bounds prescribed by this dependence. Again, each centre of experience is likewise limited by the fact that it is only one among many, and the many constitute a limiting environment which further restricts the possible directions in which development can take place. No individual centre can realise its freedom except in such ways as the environment allows; and when we speak of 'open possibilities,' these reduce themselves to the possibilities of the concrete situation. What is possible in a world of manifold interacting factors must mean what is "compossible," to use a term coined by Leibniz: in other words, what is possible for the individual taken in conjunction with the

whole system of individuals. Moreover, since the body of individuals depends for its being and interactions on a unitary Ground, the Divine Will, contingency within the system will be so limited that no developments can arise which pass beyond the divine control. In the language of religion, while God cannot be said absolutely to predestinate everything which happens, nevertheless the spontaneity of his creatures entirely falls within his providential government of the world. In other words, spontaneity thus exercised is quite compatible with the teleological conception of the universe, for every fresh movement must stand in some relation to the past and present, and can only work itself out within the conditions prescribed by the general order. The individual does not arbitrarily select its end: that end is implied in its nature, and that nature is determined by God. In the case of self-conscious spirits it is possible that they may will to fulfil their true end, or that they may fail to do so. But in the latter event we can understand how, through the comprehensive conditioning activity of the Supreme Will, developments not in the line of the divine end may be brought to nought, or indirectly made to subserve the divine purpose. A divine order in the world is secured by the fundamental dependence of all finite beings. Hence, though sin and failure abound, there is a sense in which we can trust, that good will be the final goal of ill.

If experience is a living development into which freedom enters, its teleological character can only be maintained throughout, on the supposition that the Ground of the universe is an active Being. A neutral substance in which the differences of spirit and matter are merged, and whose responses are of the nature of mechanical reactions, leaves no room for a teleological order. A Spinozistic God, or *natura naturans*, excludes purpose. But the conception of the World-Ground here reached is an active and self-conscious Will, which comprehends and sustains all the individual centres of experience, is present to all and responsive to movements in all. This con-

ditioning activity of God is the pledge of the persistence of final ends in the world: it is the satisfying security for the conservation of values in the development of human experience. Here we approach the theological conception of Providential action in the world, the essential idea of which is a government of the universe according to ethical and spiritual ends. Neither acts of arbitrary will nor mechanically necessary modes of operation enter into the idea of Providence. Not arbitrary will, not action "out of his mere good pleasure," on the part of God, for this is inconsistent with the constant supremacy of the teleological idea, the Idea of the Good. And not mechanical necessity in the divine working, for this is not consistent with a controlling and guiding ethical purpose. The word Providence carries with it the thought of a constant Will to the Good, which works itself out through the changing situations and crises of the world and human history. And if the world have its Ground in a self-conscious and ethical Will, faith in a Providential order of things has a sufficient justification for itself.

NOTE.

The Problem of Interaction.

An old and persisting problem of Metaphysics is the relation of the Many to the One. The problem may be regarded from different sides, and in the foregoing chapter I have approached it from the side which presents the issue, How do the many centres of experience come into connexion or interaction, and so form one world or universe? A general solution to the question was found in the conception of a World-Ground theistically conceived. At the same time certain perplexing problems about the nature of interaction were not discussed, and I have thought it better not to pass them by in silence. The student of philosophy will feel that some more explicit pronouncement is called for; and as the subject is difficult and its discussion must be somewhat technical, I have dealt with it in a note rather than in the body of the chapter.

The puzzling thing about interaction is to understand how an effect can, so to speak, pass from A to B, so that when A becomes A'

it is followed by a change from B to B'. Leibniz's theory of the analytic identity of subject and predicate in a proposition led him to treat the whole process of change as immanent in the subject, and to deny interaction between monads or experient centres. So for interaction he substitutes correspondence. But it is difficult to see how, if you retain, as Leibniz does, the notion of activity in dependent individuals, you can avoid admitting interaction. A purely immanent activity requires that the conditions of the activity lie wholly within the active centre itself. But, in the case of a finite and dependent substance, its activity presupposes interaction with an environment which elicits the activity and to some extent sets limits to it. The phenomena of reaction on stimulus are a familiar illustration of the dependence of organic life on conditions beyond itself. But though the reality of interaction be admitted, it is impossible to deny the force and point of Lotze's criticism of 'transeunt' action, that is to say, the passage of a state from one centre to another. How a state of an individual thing A can detach itself, as it were, from A and become a state of B, passing through a moment when it belongs neither to A nor to B, is indeed inexplicable. The figurative representation of 'passing over' cannot be justified, as Lotze has shown; and if things are individual and discontinuous, it is metaphysically unintelligible how a state of the one can ever become a state of the other. The solution proposed by Lotze in effect does away with the notion of 'transeunt' action, and substitutes for it an immanent action in the one real Being. The pluralism with which we start is merely a provisional point of view, and under stress of coherent thinking it is resolved into a monism where individual things form parts of one Reality. Call this comprehensive Reality M, then interactions mean compensatory movements within M, and they may be symbolised thus: $M=F\ (A\ B\ R)=F\ (a\ B\ R)=F\ (a\ B\ R')$. So the immanent changes balance one another in M, and we are told that the apparent independence of things is due to the varying offices which M imposes on them.[1] The result of this argument is to reduce interactions to compensatory movements within the life of the one Being; and it is not surprising that in his later work Lotze no longer definitely treats things as souls or spiritual centres.[2] He insists, nevertheless, that beings who are self-conscious possess a reality of their own which is not lost in the Absolute. But it is not made clear how these self-conscious beings can interact and still retain their individuality, their being for self. And, in the light of the continuity of psychical development, can we consistently limit individual existence to self-conscious spirits? To put it briefly, there is something contradictory in the

[1] *Vid. Metaphysics*, Eng. tr., vol. i. p. 165 ff.

[2] *Op. cit.* pp. 225–229. Cp. Kronheim, *Lotzes Kausaltheorie und Monismus*, 1910, pp. 101–103.

idea that a man's soul is his own, while his body, which he also in some fashion owns, is a determination of the Absolute. For we should be forced to this conclusion, if things are only phases of the one Reality. Meanwhile it is left unexplained how the single real Being gives rise to the illusion of individuality in the world and to the appearance of interaction between individuals.

In face of the continuity of psychical development, it is desirable to retain the conception of a graduated order of monads or spiritual substances; and, if so, some other interpretation of interaction is needed which will not swallow up individuals in the unity of their ground. On this subject Prof. Ward's remarks in his recent volume of Gifford Lectures, *The Realm of Ends*, are suggestive and important.[1]

Prof. Ward does not follow Lotze in questioning the existence of monads, but deliberately retains and makes use of a graduated order of spiritual centres in his theory of nature and of organisms. Tracing the notion of centres of experience downwards, he finds complexity of structure steadily diminish; and the limit is reached in the conception of the 'bare monad,' "whose organism, so to say, reduces to a point, and its present to a moment; which can only react immediately and to what is immediately given. In other words, such monads deal only with their environment and, so long, that is, as they remain bare monads, they severally deal with it always in the same way. The existence of an indefinite number of such monads would provide all the 'uniform medium' for the existence of higher monads that these can require." These bare monads interact immediately in virtue of a 'sympathetic rapport,' and inasmuch as they have only external relations to one another, form "the common organism or matrix of all monads." Ward thinks the bare monads can perform this function because their psychical life is reduced to immediacy. We quite agree with Dr. Ward, that a graduated order of monads correlated in a system through a central monad, forms the best working theory of the relation of mind and body. And yet there are undoubtedly difficulties in the way of a complete reduction of matter to monads.

Dr. Ward, using a phrase of Lotze's, says the immediate interactions of bare monads is due to 'sympathetic rapport.' One may accept this statement and still find that it describes rather than explains what takes place. Presumably this sympathetic relationship is based on the action of the Divine Ground, for one cannot suppose the monads endow themselves with their elective affinities. At the same time, the monads, however bare, remain in the last resort individual, and are therefore discontinuous. The bare monad, however elementary and immediate its experience, is nevertheless

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 255 ff.

a distinct centre whose experience is not merged in, or confluent with, that of other monads; and it is not intelligible how the action of discontinuous elements generates the appearance of a continuum in presentation. Probably Dr. Ward holds that, at the extreme downward limit of monadistic development, where we have pure immediacy of experience, the sharpness of individuality is lost, and the many for a cognitive subject appear and function as a continuous medium. It is not, however, evident how they should do so, for in the end they remain mutually exclusive individuals. But over and above this, monadism encounters serious difficulties when it has to explain how an interacting system of experient centres can give an adequate interpretation of the relatedness of things. Relations in this sense are not superimposed on the terms related: they are given in and with them, and the two, the terms and the relations, are inseparably united in any concrete situation. Hence it is as impracticable to say that thought makes the relatedness of things, as it is to say that it makes the things themselves. In the case of relations given in a presentation-complex, if we are to affirm that centres of experience are all that exist, then these relations can only signify interactions between these centres. Where relations mean the real relatedness of elements in a presentation, as distinguished from what Lotze calls mental "acts of reference," are they capable of being construed as interactions between monads? If a stands to b in the fixed relation R, then the total in presentation is symbolised by the complex $a\ R\ b$. But if R merely denotes the qualification of a and b as a' and b', how can a subject S, which *ex hypothesi* is only supposed to apprehend a and a' and b and b', form the idea of the constant relation R between them? For S can only apprehend an experience, in other words, states of a and states of b, and neither in a nor b is there a state which corresponds to $a\ R\ b$. How is S enabled to posit the constant relation R in distinction from a causal series of states in a and b? One would reply that to make this possible S must apprehend more than experiences in a and b, in fact must apprehend a and b as elements in a continuum involving the relation R between them. For it is the *togetherness* of a and b which is expressed by R, and this togetherness is not represented in the qualifications of a and b taken separately. It is perfectly true, as Lotze has shown, that the relations cannot be merely external to the terms, nor the terms indifferent to the relations. But it is also true that, if the terms have a reality in themselves, then with the reality of the terms there is bound up the fact of their relatedness. And this relatedness is not explained by the states or inner qualifications of the terms themselves. If this argument be sound there is an aspect of experience which monadism does not adequately interpret.

There is another consideration which so far strengthens the case

against the reduction of matter to monads. Developed centres of experience do not interact directly, but always through a common medium. One mind cannot immediately know another: inter-subjective intercourse is made possible by outward signs and symbols, by the gesture, the spoken word, and the printed page. At a lower level, organisms do not immediately share one another's life, but they are constantly affecting each other through the environment which they share in common. Neither as consciousness nor as life do we find one centre of experience becoming the direct and immediate object to another centre of experience. It is therefore, to say the least, questionable whether we can retain the notion of individuality, if we are to postulate monads of so low a grade that they interact immediately. For what is there then to distinguish one monad from another? It seems more reasonable to suppose that, though the bare monad is the limit of individuality, it is not the limit of being; that beyond the lowest centres of experience extends a continuous medium out of which they are differentiated and in which they interact. If we distinguish a real and an ideal side in the system of monads, the ideal side would denote the development of experience in an experient centre. On the real side all monads would share, through its presence in each of them, in one real and continuous being: this being would be the active medium of responsive movements between its differentiations, and the constant basis for ideal development in individuals. This ideal development, which involves the principle of creative synthesis, would bring about the highest degree of individuality or distinctiveness in centres of experience. On the other hand, when the ideal side of the monads was at its lowest, the approach to direct and immediate interaction would be closest, though immediacy could not be reached so long as there were discontinuous centres of experience. With the increasing complexity of organic evolution, under a dominant monad individuals of a higher grade would emerge, whose interaction would be mediated by the lower monads in them and by the common medium which was continuously present in the lower monads.

It will probably be objected to the foregoing theory, that it sets being over against experience, and lands us in a dualism which is even more intractable than the problem of interaction between individuals. This objection, I venture to say, rests on a misconception, for there is no intention to assert an ultimate difference in kind between individual experients and the medium in which they interact. This common being simply denotes the limit at which experience passes from the discontinuous into something which is continuous. On this point let me quote Professor Stout: "On the other hand, we must set aside any view which regards this realm of independent existence as disparate in kind or as discontinuous in

existence with the presentations through which we, as thinking beings, are conversant with it."[1] In other words, the reality which exists beyond presentation cannot be heterogeneous from that which exists in presentation. The ideal and the real, the discontinuous and the continuous, are two contrasted sides of existence, and their necessary relation to each other would be unintelligible if they differed *toto cœlo*. The transition from the continuous to the discontinuous presupposes no difference in kind. Continuous being so conceived, resembles the original 'stuff' of the world which Plato tentatively described in the *Timæus*, and called "the receptacle and as it were the nurse of all becoming."[2] It is something very different from the matter of the materialist. From the latter it is impossible on any showing to derive mind; but the common medium which we postulate is mind in the making, and forms the basis of ideal development. On the theory here advocated the monads and the medium form a system, neither existing apart from the other, and both involved in the process of experience as its ideal and real sides. This being which is present in all monads is manifested in the process of becoming experienced: in this process it reveals its nature. Its existence explains the continuous relatedness of things in the complex of presentation, which for the developed mind assumes the form of a spatially extended whole.[3]

Those who have followed the argument may put to us a relevant question at this point. They will perhaps ask: If the common medium you postulate is not itself psychical experience, nor a material entity, what kind of reality belongs to it? Does it exist independently of all experience? That it is not constituted by mundane experience is evident, for it forms the basis out of which finite centres of experience are differentiated and developed. Nor can it be simply identified with the Divine Experience, for this would be something conscious and individual, which *ex hypothesi* the medium is not. On the other hand, the universal medium cannot be an independent reality which is somehow interpolated

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[1] *Vid.* his article in *Mind*, N.S., No. 77, p. 8. It is owing to remarks of Dr. Stout's, taken in connexion with difficulties raised by interaction, that the present writer has realised the need of reconsidering the theory of monads. Dr. Stout has thrown out some pregnant suggestions on this subject, but he has not given any full and authoritative exposition of his views. I am not certain how far he would agree with the opinions put forward in this note.

[2] *Tim.* 49 A: *πάσης εἶναι γενέσεως ὑποδοχὴν αὐτό, οἷον τιθήνην.*

[3] Perhaps it is not hazardous to hint that this basal community in all psychical centres may help to explain obscure mental phenomena like thought-suggestion and thought-transference.

between the human spirit and the Divine, because it shares to the full the dependence of the individuals that interact within it on the World-Ground. We must rather think of it as something brought into being and constantly sustained by the Supreme Will, and having no reality apart from that Will. As such it is, in its totality, embraced by the Divine Experience, while its manifestation to human experience is partial and incomplete. The truth of this theory posits a creative activity on the part of the transcendent Will, of which man's mundane activity can furnish no representation. But though analogy fails us here, the relation can be truthfully thought under the notion of constant dependence.

The relation of the conception here outlined to the theory of Lotze ought to be noted. It is common to both theories that interaction is explained through the presence of one being in all interacting centres. But with Lotze this means the absorption of all centres of being in the one Absolute Being, and the resolution of pluralism into monism. In the present case it is expressly denied that the common medium in which experient centres exist and interact is the Absolute, nor is that medium identified with the Ground of the World. The being in which the monads subsist is neither their source nor their ultimate reason, and entirely shares the derivative character of the mundane system which it goes to constitute. Individuals and the medium in which they interact form a dependent system, the ground of which lies beyond the system itself. That ground is an all-comprehending Divine Will, of which the being of the world is the expression.

It would be consistent with a theistic philosophy of religion to say that all centres of experience are brought into a sympathetic relation, so that they interact freely with one another, by the agency of the Divine Will. And the operation of the Divine Will might be conceived after the analogy of the activity of the soul in an organism. In this way the dependence of all individuals on God would be ensured, although, as we see in Lotze, the tendency of thought, intent on unification, would be to make the divine activity a purely immanent process, and to identify God with the world-system. But though this tendency is intelligible, it is not, I think, in the circumstances inevitable, and it would still be open to insist on the transcendent aspect of the World-Ground. So long as this is made clear, and finite individuals are not reduced to mere appearances of the Absolute Being, it cannot be said that metaphysical theory conflicts with the spiritual interests of the religious consciousness. The objections to this view are less due to a religious than to a speculative motive. For it is hard to understand how 'sympathetic rapport' is brought about on these terms. But the main objection to the theory is, what I may call the realistic implications of experience itself. The purely monadistic structure of reality does not explain the

continuity of being, nor can it adequately interpret the inherent relatedness of things. So far, at least, one must admit the force of the polemic of the New Realists against the purely idealistic view of relations. And though we realise that no metaphysical theory will ever be final and complete, we are bound to prefer the theory which seems most consistent with the facts.

CHAPTER XII.

GOD: HIS RELATIONS AND ATTRIBUTES.

A.—Historic Conceptions of God.

In the previous chapter we have tried to show that a World-Ground, theistically conceived, is the best solution of the problems presented by the external universe and the values of the spiritual life. But the idea of a Supreme Will or Ground of the world, to which we have been led, calls for some further explanation—explanation more especially of the relation in which this Will stands to the world and to finite minds. In view of current theories this seems desirable, and the present chapter attempts to deal with the subject.

It will be convenient to begin our endeavour to define more fully the relations of God to the cosmos by examining certain conceptions of God which stand out in the historic development of the religious consciousness. The development of religion, regarded from one point of view, is a development in the representations of God; and these varying forms of conceiving the Divine Object point to needs of which the growing religious spirit becomes conscious. Of these representations three broad types are selected, and by examining them we shall make clear to ourselves the lines on which an answer to our problem is to be found. The nature of the religious consciousness is exhibited most fully in its developed forms; and the types to which I refer belong to the higher stages of religion, when the relation of God to the world has become an object of thought. They are Deism, Pantheism, and Theism.

(a) *Deism.*

The Deistic conception of God has been formed under the influence of the human analogy. As man is contrasted with his work, so is Deity here set over against his world. God is not immanent in mundane things, nor does he continuously sustain them: he rather exists outside or alongside them. This apartness of God from his world is characteristic of the Deistic conception; he is, indeed, supposed to create the world, but does not stand to nature and man in any intimate and living relation. Revelation is not thought to be a process at work within the individual and the movement of history. It is rather restricted to a single act, the act by which God endowed man with his natural reason, which is the light of natural religion and its norm. This way of thinking was foreshadowed by Aristotle in the well-known theory of Deity outlined in Book XII. of his *Metaphysics*. God, he tells us, is pure form, for ever separated from material and mutable things. He is the pure activity of mind, a thinking on thought; and moves his world from without only as the object of desire. In modern times it was the Deistic writers of the seventeenth and the eighteenth century, with their idea of a 'natural religion' which was the embodiment of the natural human reason, who gave currency to what is commonly called Deism. Deism stood for a rationalising rather than a spiritual impulse, and its adherents were concerned to set forth an idea of God which would commend itself to the abstract understanding, not to interpret loyally the inner needs and practical desires of the religious soul. Hence this movement has never stood in any close relation to the spiritual life. At a later date we find a survival of the Deistic tendency in J. S. Mill's theory of a God who is limited in various ways, and is not omnipotent. On the whole, however, Deism had ceased to be a living force before the close of the eighteenth century, and fresh currents in philosophy and literature quickened the reaction against

it. In Germany the sympathetic study of Spinoza, introduced by Lessing, worked as a new leaven, and Goethe and others who had learned in this school gave voice to the disrepute into which the notion of an extra-mundane God had fallen:—

> "Was wär' ein Gott, der nur von aussen stiesse,
> Im Kreis das All am Finger laufen liesse."

In the same spirit Carlyle spoke scornfully in his *Sartor Resartus* of "an absentee God, sitting idle, ever since the first Sabbath, at the outside of his universe, and seeing it go."[1] In truth, the whole movement of thought, from the beginning of the nineteenth century onwards, was hostile to the narrow rationalism which was the atmosphere in which Deism flourished. The rise and growth of the idea of evolution made common a way of regarding the world and life which was unfavourable to the Deistic conception of God. As men became familiar with the notion of a development going on in all things, they sought for evidence of Deity within the world-process rather than without it. At the present day thinkers are more keenly alive to the defects of Deism, than disposed to ask whether, after all, it might not contain some elements of truth. Yet I think it can hardly be denied that Deism, despite its obvious shortcomings, emphasised certain facts about God which deserve to be kept in mind. The Deist at all events made the word God stand for something definite, not for a vague 'stream of tendency' nor an elusive impersonal reason. God was not a shadowy Absolute, but a determinate Being in determinate relations to the world and man; and if this sober rationalism saw the world under a cold and hard light, failing to realise the depth and mystery of God and spiritual things, it still recognised that the object of worship was a personal Being who deserved the reverence of persons. Finally, Deism in maintaining that God was transcendent, therefore not to be confused with things or human spirits, was setting

[1] *Op. cit.*, Bk. ii. cap. vii.

forth a sound religious principle which has too often been obscured. For undoubtedly the religious mind thinks God is above the world, and not dependent upon it. On the other hand, the defects of Deism are conspicuous, and they have often been emphasised. It insists on the apartness of God so as to isolate him from the world, and invests the latter with a kind of false independence. In other words, it ignores the continuous and intimate dependence of the world on God, and his activity within it which is implied in the notion of the divine immanence. In a similar way it fails to recognise that inner relationship of human spirits to the Divine Spirit which is involved in the nature and working of religion. "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirits," says St. Paul; but the Deist is content to believe that man, once furnished with the light of reason, went his own way in the world. Hence Deism provides no sufficient explanation of the facts of religious communion and of the revelation of God to and in human souls. Its tendency was to a purely rational interpretation of religion, and this is psychologically false and spiritually inadequate. So one can understand how Deism is an attempt to rationalise religion rather than a genuine utterance of the religious spirit. It is, that is to say, a critical rather than a spiritual movement.

(b) *Pantheism.*

Pantheism is a phase of religious thought exactly opposite to Deism, and historically it is more important. The pantheistic tendency emerges in very different systems of culture, appearing and reappearing, and it has a fascination for certain orders of religious mind. In the far East, in ancient Egypt and in Greece, among the Western peoples of mediæval and of modern times, pantheistic systems have exercised a commanding influence. They have impressed the intellect of men, and have yielded a kind of satisfaction to the human heart. Much more than Deism, Pantheism appeals to real instincts of

the religious consciousness. Religion has its mystical side; and Mysticism often takes the form of aspiration after a union with God which means an absorption into the Divine. And when such Mysticism seeks to give an intellectual justification of itself, it inclines to develop some form of pantheistic theory. Moreover, from the intellectual point of view, the pantheist may plead that his theory gives effect to the scientific desire for unity. Scientific thinking strives to show that behind the variety of phenomena is a universal law, a principle which comprehends them and expresses itself through them: so the seeming many in the end are one. And it may be said we are only giving a more extended application to the same movement of mind, when we see in all the variety of the universe one single and all-embracing Being. Thus it is that Pantheism claims to be the legitimate goal and resting-place of thought.

When we speak of Pantheism, however, it is needful to remember we are dealing with a somewhat elusive word, a word whose spiritual significance is not well-defined. Like idealism, the term denotes a movement of thought which has passed into distinct forms and phases, and the religious meaning of these is by no means identical. There is materialistic Pantheism and there is idealistic Pantheism; some pantheistic systems set forth God as self-conscious, others as unconscious; some proclaim the world is real, while others declare it is an illusion. Consequently it would be impossible to say that the general notion of Pantheism conveys a clear and consistent doctrine, whose spiritual and ethical value can be definitely determined. Some pantheistic writers, in virtue of their tone and temper of mind, approximate to Christian modes of thought and expression, while some are distinctly anti-religious. Nevertheless, where Pantheism assumes a genuinely religious colouring, it will be found that it fails to develop rigorously the logical consequences of its own premisses.

I have already referred to the influence of the study of Spinoza in giving strength to the reaction against

Deistic views towards the end of the eighteenth century. Spinoza's system, though it did not win general acceptance, stimulated thinkers and poets to see the immanence of God in nature and in man. This new sympathy between nature and the human mind seemed to suggest an inner affinity, the presence in both of 'something far more deeply interfused,'

> "A motion and a spirit that impels
> All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
> And rolls through all things."

So far as Spinoza himself was concerned, the defects of his theory were too transparent. It absorbed all finite things and persons in the gulf of substance, without explaining how the differences of the experienced world could have issued from that abstract and colourless identity. A conception of God, it was felt, which would bear philosophic criticism and successfully replace the limited Deity of Deism, must not entail a sheer identification of God with the spatial universe, nor, on the other hand, deny that the world possessed a degree of reality. God must not be thought to be present with the same fulness in a stone as in a human soul, and the multiplicity of finite things should have their due place and function in the Whole. With a proper regard for these considerations, pantheistic idealism was developed in the nineteenth century, and in consequence has assumed a more subtle and plausible form than older types of pantheistic theory. I am referring more particularly to the Hegelian type of idealism, which in varying forms has proved an important influence during the earlier and latter parts of last century. Some writers of this school are anxious to distinguish their mode of conceiving the universe from what they call Pantheism, and a criticism of Pantheism often figures in their writings. Thus a contemporary thinker declares that Constructive Idealism, as he elects to call it, differs from Pantheism by *not* conceiving the Divine as equally manifested in nature and in mind, and in *not* robbing the

finite of reality.[1] Another thinker, writing from a somewhat different standpoint but still advocating pantheistic idealism, tries to assign a relative independence to finite spirits by conceiving their relation to the Divine Spirit after the analogy of the individual mind and its particular states.[2] Both thinkers, I take it, would admit transcendence in the sense that God is always more than nature and finite minds. But without embarking on detailed criticism, I believe one or two general considerations will make it clear that these theories involve principles which expose them to the same objections which can be urged against every form of Pantheism.

Modern forms of monistic idealism which identify God with the Absolute, despite the stress they lay on the fact of differentiation in the Absolute, are none the less committed to the principle that the being of God is all-inclusive. Nothing exists or can exist outside this single real Being. The truth of all finite spirits is their existence as elements in or expressions of the Absolute Mind or Will. They are merely the differences which the Absolute takes up into itself, that it may be a complete and individual Whole. And every system which asserts God to be the Absolute in this all-inclusive fashion must be reckoned pantheistic, even although those who accept the system disclaim the title. For the reality of everything is God in some form or phase of his self-manifestation: not even human souls have a being-for-self in the strict sense of the word.

There is something vaguely grand and impressive in the pantheistic idea: it will always possess an attraction for certain orders of mind, and it is the logical issue of a

[1] Watson, *The Philosophical Basis of Religion*, pp. 444–446. Spinoza is no doubt thought to rob the finite of reality, yet Professor Watson for himself asserts that what we call finite is a particular phase of the Whole viewed in its isolation (p. 438). Spinoza says the apparent independence of things is due to *Imaginatio*; Professor Watson affirms it is owing to isolation or abstraction. For the Hegelian what is abstract is to that extent untrue, so the two conceptions are really not so far apart.

[2] Paulsen, *Einleitung in die Philosophie*, p. 250.

certain trend of thought. Yet the facts of experience do not cohere well with the idea that God is all, and those who think so must be content to ignore or to forget much. The difficulties which beset the conception, if they are not exclusively found in the sphere of human consciousness, are at least most patent and urgent there; and we will confine ourselves chiefly to them. First of all, it baffles us entirely to think how the finite mind can, at one and the same time, be the individual's mind and also a part of the Divine Mind. It is the essence of the conscious spirit to be for self, to refer to itself, and to distinguish itself from all other things. Finite minds, however much they depend on one another for their self-development, yet as consciousnesses do not interpenetrate or merge into one another. Nor does the idea of the "social consciousness" furnish any analogy which would help us to understand the inclusion of the human in the Divine Mind. For the "social consciousness" denotes ideas, traditions, tendencies, and aspirations shared by many minds in common: it signifies a content common to many minds, but is in no way a self-consciousness such as we suppose God must be.

Those who affirm the self-consciousness of God and of man, and also affirm the inclusion of the latter in the former, are really saddled with a hopeless problem. They have to explain how this limited, imperfect and incomplete experience which I call my own, is really owned by God, and forms part of his perfect and complete experience. It is not admissible to look now at the human and then at the divine, and to suggest that by the logic of concrete identity the two must be one. The crux of the problem is to explain how my specific consciousness at this given moment can, without ceasing to be mine, be also God's consciousness. The suggested analogy of the self and its states sheds no light on the subject. For the particular state of consciousness is not a state of consciousness in its own right, but only in virtue of its relation to the central self to which it belongs: we are, in fact, only dealing with

one consciousness, not with the relation of one consciousness to another. We shall be told, perhaps, that a human experience is expanded and transformed when regarded as part of God's experience. Yet this suggestion makes it not one whit clearer how the specific experience which means this to me should also mean something quite different to God. The pain which I feel cannot at one and the same time be my pain and part of God's harmonious experience. And what is true of experience in the form of thought and feeling likewise holds good of experience as will. The consciousness of freedom and personal autonomy, which goes with the exercise of the personal will, cannot be justified if my will is really the expression of the Divine Will. If I am, in my acts of willing, the mere manifestation of the Divine Will, it is hopelessly inconsistent to say my acts are the free and responsible expression of my own will. Harmony with the will of God does not mean absorption into it, but free co-operation with it:—

"Our wills are ours to make them Thine."

In other words, identification with the Divine Will on man's part really signifies an act of faith and freedom by which he makes the Divine End his own end: it is not the recognition of the actual identity of his will with God's will. The facts of moral and spiritual experience are really unintelligible on the pantheistic theory that there is only one will in the universe, of which all things, material and human, are the utterance. While religion teaches that true living is conformity to the will of God, it always presupposes in individuals the freedom to obey or to fail to obey. Pantheism, on the contrary, if it is consistent, must be fatalistic and can admit neither contingency nor human initiative within the rigid order of the universe.

But the vogue of Pantheism in the history of religion and philosophy would be inexplicable if it were a mere tissue of errors; in some ways it must respond, or appear to respond, to human needs. I have already suggested that it seems to meet man's desire for unity and complete-

ness in his conception of the world. The vision of the universe as a single and all-pervading system appears to be the true goal of that departmental knowledge which does not satisfy, and ever points beyond itself. And if the pantheist proclaims that the truth of finite things is God, the theist will at least agree that, though mundane objects exist, they are not real in the way that God is real. Again, in emphasising the immanence of God, Pantheism fulfils a want of the religious spirit, which claims that Deity is everywhere present in the world, and that no region of experience lies outside the divine care and keeping. Spiritual religion certainly affirms that all things are in God in the sense that he comprehends, sustains, and works through all. Pantheism, however, converts this truth into an error by resolving the activity of God in the world and the human soul into an identity of nature and substance.

(c) *Theism.*

Deism and Pantheism, as we have seen, contain elements of truth, though the truth is mingled with error. The former rightly asserts the transcendence of God, and the latter his immanence. Theism proclaims that God is both immanent and transcendent, thus seeking to unite what is true in Deism and in Pantheism. In contrast to these theories, which have been largely influenced by intellectual motives and interests, the theistic conception is the outcome of a more purely religious motive. Theism did not come into being in conscious antagonism to Deism and Pantheism, nor did it offer itself as a candid criticism of their shortcomings: it shaped itself out of the needs and desires of the religious spirit as these gradually defined themselves in the course of historic development. It accordingly stands in a close relation to the actual working of the religious consciousness. As one would expect, then, the spiritual and religious values have played an important part in forming the theistic view of the world. When men approach God by the path of working

religion, they do not ask how they are rationally to conceive of him: they rather inquire how the needs of the spirit lead them to represent God in relation to the world and themselves. But the idea of God thus formed in response to the demands of the spiritual life may properly be made the object of reflexion. Hence on the basis of theistic religion and its spiritual values, thought has occupied itself with the problem of trying to think out coherently what is involved in the notion of God which is the outcome of developed and practical religion.

This intimate relation of Theism to the living interests of religion is apparent in its attitude to the immanence and transcendence of God. It maintains both conceptions, led to do so not by stress of logic, but by the claims of spiritual value. The spiritual worshipper requires a God not far off but very near, a God whose spirit bears witness with the spirits of those who reverently seek him. Communion with a Deity dwelling in a region remote, and dimly discerned 'on the limit far withdrawn,' would not be the living communion which religion requires. Pious feeling finds God within the region of human activity; and an Object of worship whose exclusive dwelling-place was in the ineffable Beyond could neither deeply move the heart nor inspire the will. Yet along with this demand for the presence of God in the world the religious spirit calls for a God who is exalted above the world and man, the mystery of whose being the human reason cannot fully penetrate. Were it not stimulated by this element of transcendence in God, the flame of spiritual reverence would sink low. Religious faith will not be satisfied with a purely mundane Deity: faith demands that its Object be lifted high above the sin and discord of the world, ruling the world and working in it for good without being submerged by it. The consciousness of human weakness, and the emotions of awe and reverence which are active in worship, are bound up with man's faith in the transcendent character of the Being before whom he bows.

When theistic thought has tried to give theoretical ex-

pression to the view of God implicit in the higher religious experience, it has essentially modified the principles both of Deism and Pantheism. While admitting with the deist that God is not identical with the world, the theist denies that the world is independent of God. He discerns the presence of divine activity behind the phenomena of nature and life, and maintains there is a continuous revelation of God in and to the spirits of men. In the other direction, Theism corrects the statements of Pantheism, and presents them in a form which is consistent with the integrity of the spiritual values. The pantheistic assertion, "All is one," the theist transforms into the very different proposition, "All depends on one." To put it differently, instead of saying that there is God in the universe and nothing but God, Theism declares that all elements in the cosmos are related to a single experient Subject, and are sustained by a single Will. Again, when the pantheist speaks of the identity of the self with God in the religious consciousness, the theist speaks of communion and co-operation with God in religious worship and religious life. Thus a pure identification which, rightly understood, is non-religious, is transformed into a spiritual and ethical fellowship. In this way the human and the divine aspects of religious experience receive rightful recognition. All through it will be found, I think, that Theism, just because it is a genuine interpretation of the higher religious experience, does justice to the essentials of the religious relationship in a way that neither Deism nor Pantheism can pretend to do. In the following section an attempt is made to state more fully what is involved in the theistic conception.

B.—God in Relation to the experienced World.

By the experienced world is not meant nature merely, but the world as a complex whole, which includes animate and inanimate beings, and also human minds or spirits. From the world thus largely conceived we have tried to

show the steps which take us back to its explanation in a Supreme and Conscious Will. If the world were not real, the argument must fail of its conclusion. But critical reflexion fully justifies the verdict of the normal human judgment, that neither things nor spirits are illusory; and the demand for a Ground to explain them is perfectly valid. We shall therefore take our previous discussion as going to prove that the Divine Will is the ultimate Ground of all finite objects and spirits. But the question is still to answer, whether we can attain to a more determinate conception of the way in which the Supreme Will is related to the experienced world. Is the relation a strictly necessary one on either side, so that just as the world presupposes God, in like manner God presupposes the world? Is the relationship, that is to say, one of mutual implication? Or if this be deemed erroneous, is it possible to conceive the relation to be necessary on one side but free on the other? Theism gives a general answer to these questions by its doctrine of *creation*, and this we shall now proceed to consider.

(a) *God as Creative.*

The first point which needs to be decided is the precise meaning to be attached to the term 'creation.' In common parlance, to create means to bring into being; but to 'bring into being' is a phrase which may signify to originate absolutely, or it may merely mean to invest with a certain specific form, as when one builds a house out of pre-existing materials. Now, whether the external world was originated or received its present form at a point in time, is a subject upon which physical science casts no light. Some physicists have spoken of atoms as 'manufactured articles,' and others have asserted that this material order of things wears the appearance of having had a beginning in time, while by the gradual dissipation of energy it will have an end. Even were it possible to accept these statements, they do not carry us beyond a

relative beginning of things: they only suggest a time when the universe began to assume its present form and structure. The problem of an absolute origination is not touched.

The term 'creative' when applied to God has had several meanings, and it may be well to consider these. 1. The crudest of them is the conception that God somehow constructed the world out of material which already existed, working after the fashion of a human architect. It need hardly be said that this is a theory which no serious thinker can for a moment entertain. Not only does it found on a gross anthropomorphism, but it involves a fundamental dualism, since it postulates an original matter over against God, a matter he finds to hand when he 2. embarks on the task of framing a world. In contrast to this rude notion is the familiar but respectable theory that God created the world out of nothing. Yet this idea of creation out of nothing has something contradictory in it, and most people feel the force of the old maxim: *ex nihilo nihil fit.* There is no doubt a certain inconsistency in the idea of *creating out of nothing*, as if what is purely negative could be made in some inexplicable fashion to yield a positive; and the perception of the difficulty involved has had a decided effect on speculation. In truth, when we speak of creating, it is almost impossible for us to avoid the use of terms and analogies drawn from the sphere of human activity; and these, though applicable to relations *within* the experienced world, cannot validly describe how the world itself came into being. What is important in the thought of creation *ex nihilo* is the undoubted fact, that one cannot point to anything out of which the world could have been created. This disability which attaches to our human mode of representation is awkwardly and inadequately turned into the positive statement that the world was created out of nothing. The difficulty of this conception led to another view of the nature of creation, a view which has figured more largely in ancient than in 3. modern speculation. I mean the theory of creation as

emanation. On this theory the world is an efflux from God, a manifestation of the substance of his being. The world in this way is thought to be a necessary development of God, whose life passes into nature and mind, and returns from them again. From the standpoint of theoretical explanation this conception might seem to possess an advantage, for it lays stress on the principle of continuity or inner connexion. There is no break in the transition of the World-Ground into its consequent: God is the necessary source of the world, and the world is the necessary outcome of God. Plainly, however, this idea is open to all the objections which can be urged against Pantheism. It blends the being of God with things, and its conception of the world neither gives scope for human freedom nor for the development of the ethical values. Moreover, it offers no explanation how a spiritual emanation can wear the appearance of a material and spatially extended universe. In the end, creation by emanation is not more intelligible, and in some respects leads to greater difficulties, than the idea of creation by an act of will. There is, indeed, no way in which we can represent to ourselves the process by which the Supreme Will brings things into being. But the true and valuable thought which underlies this conception of a creative Will is the thought of a constant dependence of the world on God. This theory at all events presents fewer difficulties than the others.

In putting forward this view we think it desirable to make certain explanations, and to remove some possible misconceptions. And first of all we shall be told, that there are grave objections to the notion that the world was brought into being at a specific point in time; and so no doubt there are. There is a contradiction in the idea of a Deity quiescent for ages, and then, late in time, suddenly stimulated to create a world. If the creation of the world is a good, then God for ages must have been content with a lesser when it was in his power to produce a greater good. Or, if not content, then, though he desired the

greater good, his will must have been inadequate to its achievement. Neither view is consistent with the Divine Nature. In short, what conceivable reason for creation could become operative at a point in time which was not operative from the first? To these criticisms no satisfactory answer is possible. This fact suggests to us that the problem may have been wrongly stated—stated in a way which involves presuppositions which are not legitimate. This turns out to be the case. It is impossible to conceive consistently the world brought into being at a point in time, for in so doing an improper use is being made of the time-idea. The time-form does not antedate the birth of things, but, if the expression may be allowed, comes into existence with them. Augustine perceived this truth and expressed it in his saying: *non in tempore sed cum tempore finxit Deus mundum.* On similar grounds, it seems, Origen was led to deny that the world had a beginning. From the theological point of view we cannot think that God, in harmony with his goodness, formed ideas of the world but delayed to realise them.[1] The trouble, we repeat, is due to a fallacy in the use of the notion of time, the fallacy, as Lotze put it, of interposing empty time between the world as possible and as actual. For time is not an empty form within which a possible universe is realised; as we have argued more than once, it is a conceptual form which has been gradually developed on the basis of the real and its changes. Hence the mistake of representing creation in terms of a form of order which is actually posterior to it, and the consequent difficulty of justifying a beginning at a particular point. For the notion of a beginning postulates a time-order already existing.

On the whole the perplexities which beset this subject are largely due to the intrusion of human causal ideas into a sphere where they have no relevancy. It is futile to try to form any image of creation by the help of mundane or 'transeunt' causality. For such envisagement of the

[1] So Nitzsch, *Evangelische Dogmatik*, 1912, p. 431.

causal relation implies the existence of succession in time, and signifies a process which has continuance in time. This concrete representation has meaning within the orderly world of our experience, but it cannot apply to the divine activity in bringing the temporal world into being. God is prior to the world in a logical rather than in a temporal sense.

The question may be put, whether no further light can be shed on this problem. Is the most and best we can do simply to confess and explain the limitations of our minds? Can we not say something positive about the nature of God's creative activity? Attempts have been made to do so, but they do not carry us very far. A recent writer on the Philosophy of Religion tells us the Divine Nature is a living unity which contains 'potencies' within it: creation denotes the passing forth of these 'potencies' into existence by an act of the Divine Will, though how this takes place, we are told, must remain a mystery.[1] The explanation seems to be verbal rather than real. The contrast implied of possible and actual can only be thought out by an illegitimate application of our idea of time to God; and there are serious objections to our importing the notion of unrealised possibilities into the nature of the Deity. For we are applying the analogy of human development to a Being whom we must suppose to be intrinsically perfect and complete.

The inherent impulse to visualise in terms of mundane experience effectively precludes us from successfully representing the divine creative activity. The human will in bringing about results in the external world is constantly dealing with a matter which is given to it, and more or less intractable. Herein lies the essential difference between the human will and the Divine Will. God in his creative act of will is limited by nothing outside himself, and in willing he gives being to the content of his will. The object of his will is not outside himself, but in willing is one with his will. For God, the transcendent Creator,

[1] A. Dorner, *Grundriss der Religionsphilosophie*, pp. 239–240.

is the ground both of what he knows and what he wills. Professor Ward has suggested that some analogy to creative action may be found in the work of creative genius among men.[1] The analogy will prove helpful if it is not pressed too far. The poet or the artist, by the exercise of his will, gives outward form and body to his thoughts and emotions, so that they acquire a kind of being for themselves and 'live, and act, and serve the future hour.' The creative spirit is able to endow its intuitions with a sort of spiritual independence which, in the case of works of the highest genius, does not suffer them to grow old and die. On the other hand, it is plain that human genius requires the mediation of an external order of things to give substance and endurance to its thoughts. In the case of God's creative Will there can be no such mediation; and the object of the Divine Will must remain always in living relation to God and in constant dependence upon him. The created world, though it is distinguished from God, has nevertheless no being apart from God. According to the theory suggested in these pages, the continuum or common medium, the preliminary basis within which individual centres of experience form and interact, would be the immediate and direct expression of God's creative Will. And what we call creation is just our human way of expressing the intimate and continuous dependence of this world in the making on God. The differentiations and interactions by which development proceeds participate in this constant dependence on the divine Ground. We cannot properly say this interacting system is ushered into being at a point within the time series. For the time-order itself is a conceptual development gradually elaborated by individual minds which have evolved within the cosmic whole.

(b) *God as Immanent and Transcendent.*

In the preceding section, when dealing with "Historic Conceptions of God," we had occasion to refer frequently

[1] *The Realm of Ends*, p. 239.

to the divine immanence and transcendence. The problem, however, deserves to be discussed directly and critically; for the terms are often used without any exact appreciation of their meaning, and thus a specious phrase may cover a real vagueness of thought. In particular, what precise significance attaches to the *immanence* of God from the theistic standpoint? In stating the question in this way one has to remember that the word immanence can have a double reference, to nature and to the human mind. In a pantheistic system there ought not to be any reasonable doubt about the sense in which God is immanent. Immanence in this case must in the long run resolve itself into an identification with God. When pantheistic idealists affirm that God is immanent in nature, they mean that nature is a phase, if not a perfect and complete expression, of God's being. And the immanence of God in the human spirit signifies that the finite mind is a differentiation of God's spirit under certain spatial and temporal limitations. The theist, who holds that the religious life is based on communion with God, not on identification with him, cannot endorse this explanation; consequently immanence means something different for him. To the theist God's immanence must primarily denote that he brings the world into being as an utterance of himself, and continually sustains it by the energy of his will. God in his operation is continuously present to nature; for the universal medium, which is the basis of all interacting things and spirits, is in direct and constant dependence upon his Will. Human souls share the dependence of the medium in which they interact, and their activity is conditioned by the divine activity. Yet souls and things do not stand in the same relation to God's working. In the sphere of individual spirits, along with an ultimate dependence on God there is a greater relative independence. God does not so operate on the human soul that it becomes his mere passive instrument: man has a will of his own. Accordingly when religious thinkers speak about 'partaking in the life of God,' it means response to divine influence and ethical

communion with God, not actual identification with him. Despite the language which mystics sometimes use, the theist must persist in refusing to admit that the divine immanence in finite spirits signifies a fusion or blending of natures. The decisive objection to this lies in the character of human consciousness. For consciousness is unique. My consciousness is distinctively my own; and it is inconceivable how it should continue to be what it is for me and at the same time to be an element in a larger consciousness. To say that God knows my experience is one thing: to say that he is my experience is a totally different thing.

From what has been said in reference to immanence, the manner in which the theist regards transcendence follows. God transcends the world of things and selves, for he is not identical with them either individually or collectively. He is beyond them in the sense that, while they intimately depend on him and he acts on them, his self-consciousness does not depend on them. The spatial and temporal world is a manifestation of the Divine Will, but it does not enter into the substance of the Divine Nature. I do not think, however, we do justice to God's transcendence, if we suppose the Divine Being is simply a central and typical self, one self within an eternal group of selves.[1] For it is hard to find any sufficient reason for saying that finite selves are intrinsically eternal, as the theory suggests; and the whole point of our argument has been to show the dependence of finite souls and things on the creative Will of God. If that argument is valid, God does not fall within the system of finite spirits, but is the active Ground which conditions their existence. Divine transcendence rests on the truth that God, by the activity of his Will, has given being to the whole experienced world in space and time. He himself is beyond

[1] This theory is vigorously maintained and defended by Professor Howison in his *Limits of Evolution*, 1905. Dr. McTaggart, on the other hand, does away with the central self, and identifies the Absolute with a system of souls or selves (*Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*).

the spatial and temporal order: he is the transcendent Ground of the cosmological Whole, and invests it with the unity which comes of a constant dependence on himself.

(c) *God as Infinite, Eternal, and Absolute.*

In contrast to the finite and conditioned things in our experienced world, God is commonly termed Infinite, Eternal, and Absolute. It will be advisable to consider what is the exact significance of these terms when they are applied to God. And, first of all, what is meant by saying the Deity is infinite? The natural tendency is to take the word in the negative sense where it denotes the opposite of the finite. The finite in common language is the limited, the bounded; so the infinite is that which is unlimited or boundless. This is the quantitative infinite, the false infinite, as Hegel termed it. And it is clear if we are to call God infinite in this manner, not only has the predicate no ethical or religious content, but it does not seem to be compatible with self-consciousness. The infinite in the quantitative aspect, resting as it does on spatial imagery, is inherently inadequate to a spiritual Being who transcends the spatial order. To the argument of Sir William Hamilton that we cannot know a Being infinite in this way, and therefore incapable of entering into positive relations with the finite, the religious man can tranquilly reply that he has no interest in knowing him. For he could have no spiritual value to human souls. In contrast to this quantitative and negative use of the word, there is a qualitative and positive use which has a religious value. In this qualitative meaning the infinite denotes the perfect and complete, and so stands in a positive and effective contrast to the finite. The finite is finite because the grounds and conditions of its existence lie beyond itself, and are, so to speak, imposed on it from without. In virtue of this intrinsic incompleteness it cannot permanently maintain itself by its own inherent

resources. If we use the word infinite at all when speaking of God, it must bear this positive meaning of perfect, complete, and self-sufficient. God is subject to no limitations which do not issue from his own Will, and he is himself the sufficient Ground of all finite existences. He is not infinite in the sense that he embraces all existence within himself. Therefore, from one point of view, he is limited by a world of things and spirits which are other than himself. But this limitation does not spell defect, for it is self-limitation; consequently it does not carry with it the notion of restricted or diminished value.

Of greater religious significance is the notion of eternity when applied to the Divine Being. Here, too, the conception has a negative side, which has come prominently forward in the first instance. In contrast to the mutability and decay which are the doom of all earthly things, religious thought has striven to rise to the idea of a Being who was lifted high above the flux of time, and was 'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.' And the mind first tried to give expression to this notion of eternity in a negative way: it was the unending expanse of time, the everlasting duration. Here again we are confronted with a quantitative, and therefore an inadequate conception. To some, no doubt, the mystery and the greatness of Deity appeared to be enhanced when he was thought to fill all time, extending backward and forward into the limitless past and future. But here also developing thought began to question the legitimacy of the idea. After Kant's criticism, the problem of eternity was put in a new light, and the idea of timelessness, or of reality beyond time, became familiar. Time, it is said, denotes a point of view which is valid for phenomena, but it has no application to what is ultimately real. Eternity or timelessness has therefore been construed to mean the complete negation of the time-process, and a timeless character has been ascribed to the transcendental self and to God.

The theory, stated in this unqualified form, is open to serious criticism. If eternity is the pure negation of time,

and if God is eternal in this sense, one of two things must follow. Either the timeless God is absolutely cut off from the world of existences within which the time-process rules; or if not, God, the timeless Reality, is the truth of the universe, and the mundane time-process is a sheer illusion, the reality of which is the timelessly perfect Whole. Neither alternative of this awkward dilemma can possibly be accepted by the theist, who seeks to think of God in a manner consistent with his supreme value, and at the same time to maintain the values of the historic life. And if these objects are to be attained, the Divine Being, though not made subject to the time movement, must at least have what has been termed a 'functional relation' to that process. If we are not to import into our idea of Deity a limitation or disability of a pronounced kind, we must conclude that God stands in relation to succession in time, and this succession has a *meaning* for him. The complete exclusion of any reference to time in the Divine Consciousness would imply that God was shut out from the knowledge of mundane development and of human history, since to know what is in time the mind must stand in a positive relation to time. A limitation of this kind is in conflict with the religious postulate of Value. A God who could not know the time-changes in finite minds could not be reverenced as God. Moreover, as we have already urged, the fact of *change* is fundamental, and no mind is conceivable, whether human or divine, which does not imply states of consciousness that change. A God absolutely removed from change might be an impersonal substance: he could not be a living and spiritual God. The reality of changes in the Divine Mind guarantees the relation which is essential on God's part to the humanly developed time-form; though it is not possible for our concrete thinking, infected as it is with spatial and temporal images, to form an adequate representation of the Divine Consciousness. The general conclusion to which we are led in this difficult matter of the Divine Eternity may be thus briefly stated. God is not eternal in the sense of

filling endless time: this is a contradictory notion, and is, moreover, destitute of spiritual value. Nor is he eternal in the sense of having no relation to time. God could not be unrelated to time and retain his spiritual value. He is eternal because he is raised above the process of time: he is the ultimate condition of the existence of such a process, and therefore not himself subject to it.

A short reference to the use of the term Absolute in regard to God seems desirable in view of the large part played by the word in contemporary philosophy. A considerable number of thinkers at present identify God with the Absolute, while some believe the title is misleading and that it is better to avoid it.[1] There is a sense in which the theist may apply the word to God, and a sense in which he ought not to do so. Let us consider the latter first.

In current philosophy the word Absolute is frequently used to signify Ultimate Reality, the Reality which is all-embracing, harmonious, and complete. Those who adopt this view commonly try to show that, if we loyally follow the pathway to Reality, we inevitably reach the Absolute as the goal of our journey. Experience at its different levels, we are told, is beset by contradictions. We pass from one form of experience to another, only to find that no form can be thought out consistently. Each phase of experience is therefore condemned as an appearance, or at least shown to come short of reality, when we apply the principle of non-contradiction; and we are forced to go further in the quest for Reality which is perfect, satisfying, and internally harmonious.[2] The principle of non-

[1] To the former class belong the philosophers who in the main sympathise with the Hegelian line of thought: to the latter those who prefer to call themselves 'Personal Idealists.'

[2] Readers of Prof. Bosanquet's recent Gifford Lectures on the *Principle of Individuality and Value*, and the *Value and Destiny of the Individual*, will remember how persistently he uses the principle of non-contradiction—here following Mr. Bradley—as a guide to the Absolute. Though the principle of identity is even more important, in this discussion it drops into a very secondary place, so far as the world of common experience is concerned.

contradiction is thus made to give the steps of the proof which carries us triumphantly forward to the Absolute. Under the solvent of this all-powerful principle even the identity of individuals yields, and they are merged in the one identity which persists and maintains itself, the concrete Whole, the Absolute. One might reply to this 'plain tale' by denying that the individual elements of reality can be forced by this mental dialectic to yield up their identity in such a submissive fashion, and become fluctuating expressions of the Absolute. What we are immediately concerned to point out is, that the Absolute, so conceived, ought not to be identified with God, for all reality does not fall within the Divine Being. God is not the Whole, but all things depend on God. If, then, we use the term Absolute, we should be careful to point out that we do not do so after the manner of a pantheistic idealism where it coincides with the idea of God. According to the theory developed in the preceding pages the term Absolute would signify God, and the world of spirits interacting within a common medium dependent on God. In other words, the universe as a system is the Absolute, and God is not identical with the universe.

So far our conclusion is negative. There is, however, a valid meaning which the word Absolute may have when applied to God. God is Absolute in that he is the unconditioned Ground of all finite existences, and is only limited in so far as he limits himself through the world which he has created. God may therefore be appropriately designated the Absolute Ground of the world, for he is the sole and the sufficient reason of its existence. He may also be called Absolute, because he is a Being harmonious and self-complete, whose consciousness embraces the whole universe. But Absolute in the theistic acceptation of the word is definitely distinguished from the speculative Absolute which is the sum of reality.

C.—Metaphysical Attributes of God.

The foregoing remarks may be fitly followed by some observations on what are commonly termed "Metaphysical Attributes of God." The subject, as one would expect, is treated in a full and positive manner by the theologian: in the case of the religious philosopher the discussion will proceed on more general and critical lines. For the attributes in question can scarcely be said to issue from speculative theorising about the nature of God. They are rather demands of the religious consciousness, and implicated in its practical working: they reflect the desire on man's part for a more concrete representation of the Being he worships. Nevertheless a Philosophy of Religion has a critical as well as a constructive function to discharge, and ought to point out, if it can, how consistency in our religious conceptions is to be attained.

The matter is one which naturally provokes critical, and sometimes sceptical, reflexions. Are these so-called attributes purely relative and subjective points of view? Or are they based, as they claim to be, on the nature of God? Are they human qualities duly magnified and then applied to the Deity? or do they express in some way a real activity of God in relation to man? This problem was raised by theology in the course of its development, and has received different answers. The later mediæval Nominalists, for instance, came to the conclusion that the attributes merely denoted subjective modes of our apprehension, and distinction between attributes was a matter of names. In modern times the negative and critical attitude in this regard is well represented by the Dutch theologian Rauwenhoff. He frankly traces the doctrine of the Divine Attributes to its source in the religious imagination, and asserts that a Philosophy of Religion is not in a position to determine what amount of truth may be contained in these representations. The problem for him becomes a purely psychological one, so far as a religious philosophy is concerned. On the other hand, the procedure

of Schleiermacher, though critical, goes further in the direction of giving an objective basis to the doctrine. The attributes he construes as relations of God to the world, and he says they express modes in which the Divine Causality appears to us.[1] This theory, while recognising the subjective factor in human representation, does not deny the representation has an objective reference. None the less the influence of Kant and Schleiermacher has tended to make modern theology more critical and cautious in its treatment of the topic. The present tendency is to discard the methods of the older theologians,—the arguments which proceed *via eminentiæ* and *via negationis*—and to reach the divine attributes from the basis of historic revelation. And this has meant a gain in simplicity and spirituality. At present I shall restrict our discussion to certain attributes which have been commonly termed metaphysical. It is not assumed that they can be proved by reason to be implicated in the nature of God. But historically they have been associated with him, and to some extent they do enter into religious experience. Our endeavour will be to determine how far, and in what form, reflexion can justify us in predicating them of God. The attributes are Omnipotence, Omnipresence, and Omniscience.

(a) *Omnipotence.*

At every stage of his religious development, man associates with his god the idea of power. His deity can do for the worshipper what the latter cannot do for himself. A god thought to be destitute of power would possess no working-value, and could not continue to be an object of reverence. With the development of monotheism out of polytheism and the recognition of the transcendent

[1] Schleiermacher, however, does not accept the view that each attribute stands for a distinct element in the Divine Nature. "Alle Eigenschaften, welche wir Gott beilegen, sollen nicht etwas Besonderes in Gott bezeichnen, sondern nur etwas Besonderes in der Art das Schlechthinige Abhängigkeitsgefühl auf ihn zu beziehen," *Christ. Glaube*, par. 50.

character of God, the attribute of power was gradually expanded to that of Omnipotence. This process was the expression of a true spiritual need. Theistic religion calls for a Deity who can alike control the forces of nature and guide the issues of life, and in whose hands the destinies of souls are secure. Faith would be crippled in its assurance and fail of its fulness, if the object of its trust were a Being wrestling with difficulties which he could only partially overcome.

But what exactly does the conception of Omnipotence signify? Is it to be taken literally to mean that nothing is impossible to God? Some have thought that Omnipotence was incompatible with any limitations whatever. The fact that God uses means, and does not bring about the result by his mere word, seemed to J. S. Mill to prove he was not omnipotent, for he worked under limitations.[1] In reply, one would say that limitations which are willed by God do not mean defects; and when, in presence of a universe of existences, what is possible for God becomes restricted to what is *compossible*, in the Leibnizian sense, this does not argue weakness on his part. To test Omnipotence by mere abstract possibility leads only to irrelevant subtleties. It may be quite true, as Augustine said, that it is not possible for God to die, to make what is done undone, or what is false true. Yet inability to perform what is intrinsically contradictory has no bearing on the positive conception of Omnipotence. Nothing whatever would be gained for the idea of God by attributing to him the power to do what is absurd. The initial error—an error to which we have already referred in another connexion—lies in supposing that the abstract notions of possibility and impossibility are prior to the ultimately Real, or to God. On the contrary, these ideas come into being with the world of dependent and developing existences; and the conception of a possibility for God which he does not will becomes a pure abstraction. The positive and valuable element in the idea of Omnipotence

[1] *Three Essays on Religion*, 1885, pp. 176–77.

lies in the region of fact and not of possibility. God is omnipotent, since he has power to invest the content of his Will with reality, and because the whole realm of mundane existence, including the system of interacting individuals, is constantly sustained by his activity. God is all-powerful, for he is the independent and self-sufficient Ground of the being of the world, and therefore not limited by anything which does not proceed from his own Will.

There is an important question into which I have not entered, and do not propose to enter just now. It concerns the bearing of the sin and evil that are in the world on this notion of Omnipotence. If God were omnipotent he would not suffer sin to exist, it is said. If he is omnipotent and allows it to exist, this is a reflexion on his goodness. These questions will be more fitly treated in the chapter on the problem of evil. They cannot be properly discussed apart from an examination of the nature of evil.

(b) *Omnipresence.*

The religious need which finds expression in this predicate is the outcome of the developed religious consciousness. Primitive religion is local: its gods have their peculiar habitations, and in going into a strange land a man comes under the dominion of strange gods. Though not equally dominated by the genius of the place, Polytheism is pervaded by the departmental spirit, and the activity and influence of particular deities are restricted to particular spheres. In Monotheism all spheres come under the rule of the one God who is everywhere present in his world. In the Old Testament there are striking assertions of the ubiquity of Jahveh. Nowhere can man escape the universal Presence. "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in Sheol, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."

(Ps. cxxxix.). And again: "Do not I fill heaven and earth saith the Lord" (Jer. xxiii. 24). A truly spiritual conception of God carries with it the belief in the divine Omnipresence, thus finally transcending the cult of locality so dear to ancient religion. The spiritual worshipper feels no barrier can shut him out from the object of his reverence, for God is always near to them who call upon him in spirit and in truth.

The religious consciousness rests satisfied in its conviction that God is omnipresent, and does not ask about the way in which he is present. But the religious philosopher is not absolved from dealing with this problem, and he must ask how this presence of God is to be construed. It is, of course, obvious that, for the theist, the pantheistic answer is excluded: God is not everywhere because he is everything. Nor is it easy to think how the Being of God is somehow present at every point in space. The truth is that we cannot refer God, who is a Spirit, to the spatially extended world, and that because he is not a Being in space. This is another instance of the fallacy of supposing what is dependent on God to be prior to him. God is the condition of space; for he brings into being the world of interacting individuals and the medium in which they interact, and it is out of this co-existence of individual elements that the idea of spatial order is developed. Consequently the Divine Being cannot be limited by space, which, in its conceptual form, is a derived idea that implies a process of ideal construction. At the same time the sphere of his operation must extend to every point of space, since he is the active Ground of all existences; hence the notion of Omnipresence is only a way of expressing the truth that the Being of God is not separable from his activity. God is everywhere in the sense that he makes his working everywhere felt. This activity, inasmuch as it transcends the spatial order, has not to travel through space, nor does the human spirit need to traverse space in order to come to God.[1] For God is

[1] Cp. Lotze, *Religionsphilosophie*, p. 33.

the ever-present Ground of the world. An analogy may suggest to us how we should regard this Omnipresence. The soul or spiritual principle is operative throughout the body, and stands in direct relation to all the bodily elements. Yet, being a spiritual principle, it cannot be located in any organ or part of the body, although it pervades the whole. In like manner we may think of God pervading his universe and active throughout it, without himself being included in the order of things which co-exist in space.

(c) *Omniscience.*

Omniscience, remarks Mill in the work before quoted, has nothing positively to prove it.[1] We agree that there is no course of argument which can deduce the attribute of Omniscience in God from the facts of human experience. Nevertheless, monotheistic faith does find the idea of Omniscience involved in its conception of the completeness and perfection of Deity, and theologians have always included the attribute in their discussion of the Divine Nature. It remains, therefore, to ask whether philosophy can justify theology in this matter, and, if so, in what way.

When we speak of Omniscience we speak of something to which human experience offers no analogy, but a decided contrast. Man's experience is always partial and his insight fragmentary, and he is beset on every side by limitations to his knowledge. He develops as an individual within a wider realm of existence, whose meaning he spells out painfully and at the best comprehends imperfectly. Man, burdened by the consciousness of his own ignorance, and often thwarted by it, naturally thinks his Deity to be free of this defect. The possibility of Divine Omniscience must lie in the central relation of God to his universe, in virtue of which all the elements within it converge on him as their active Source and Ground. This living relation of God to the whole of

[1] *Op. cit.* p. 181.

reality suggests that his experience is universal, and his consciousness all-embracing. If God be the self-conscious Will who is the constant Ground of the medium in which individual existences and spirits interact, then every fact and movement within the complex whole must have a reference to him and possess a meaning for him. The limitation of experience, therefore, which of itself precludes completeness of knowledge on man's part, does not exist in God; and a universal experience would form the basis for a universal knowledge.

When we speak of an all-knowing Mind, we cannot suppose that such a knowledge, in its form, can be a mere expansion of human knowledge. Man knows in a discursive fashion, and the process of reasoning means effort, and it takes time. He reasons from what is given to what is implied in it, and laboriously strives to spell out in thought the systematic connexions involved in the structure of reality. But human knowing, though it has in it the impulse towards system, remains fragmentary and unfinished: indeed, to make headway at all we have to concentrate our attention on a certain aspect of reality to the exclusion of other aspects. In the very form of human judgment an act of abstraction is implied which, if it does not mean untruth, at least means incompleteness. Moreover, the shortcomings of memory preclude full knowledge of details in any direction. Now this piecemeal form of knowing, which carries on its face the impress of human limitations, cannot apply to God. His Mind cannot be under bondage to the human form of reasoning; for this takes time, presupposes a development from less to fuller knowledge, and consequently ignorance to be overcome. Our right to postulate a higher kind of knowledge in God will lie in the unique relation in which he stands to the objects of his knowledge. Objects are not given to him from without to be known, but are the expression of his Will and remain dependent upon it. Hence we may suppose that all the factors of reality, being intimately related to and experienced by God, are

known by him by 'intellectual intuition.' This *scientia intuitiva* would be an immediate apprehension of the whole, and of all the parts in their place and meaning in the whole. Each movement in things and every thought in human minds imply an experience in God, and are immediately discerned by him.

But there is an embarrassing problem which we must try to answer. Does Divine Omniscience extend to the future? Does God not only know all that is and has been, but likewise all that will be? The rigid predestinarian, who denies all freedom and contingency within the universe, will, of course, find no more difficulty in regard to the future than in regard to the past. All is determined, and so all is known. Those who hold it is not possible entirely to eliminate contingency from human development, may find it expedient to take up a less unqualified attitude. The question of divine foreknowledge is, of course, an old one; it has been a source of much perplexity, and very likely men may differ about it to the last. The Socinians held that the fact of human freedom excluded perfect prescience on the part of God. Theologians, even when they do not range themselves on the Predestinarian side, have mostly drawn back from this conclusion, declaring it to be incompatible with the Absoluteness of God. Wishing to abandon neither Divine Omniscience nor human freedom, they hold both together, usually on the plea that there is here an antinomy which defies solution by mortal powers. The theologian with his capacity for enduring contradictions may be satisfied to leave the matter thus, but the philosopher will certainly desire some further explanation and justification. It has been said that God, in contributing the means to the decisions of human wills, has made it possible for himself to foreknow the issue.[1] Yet this is not intelligible, unless you suppose that the means also contains the ground of the decision. And we cannot speak of human freedom, if the sufficient reason of an act lies outside the self as

[1] Nitzsch, *Evangelische Dogmatik*, p. 460.

will. To those who may demur to the notion that Omniscience does not include the foreknowledge of every decision of the human will, one must point out that this does not imply uncertainty about the way in which human actions will work out. The consequences of human volition in the world of existences are constantly conditioned by the wider activity of God, and the issues will be the same despite deviations by the way. This constant conditioning action of God renders the ultimate frustration of the Divine Purpose impossible. Spontaneity on any view has narrow limits, and is embraced within that larger working of God which is called Providence.

It will be evident that Omniscience in the end refers back to and finds support in the conception of Omnipotence. The final issues are clear to God, for the elements from which they proceed are all comprehended and conditioned by his Will. No developments within the universe can thwart God, for he is omnipresent, *i.e.* his Will is operative at every point. Omnipotence, Omnipresence, and Omniscience are thus interdependent attributes of the Being who is the Ground of experience and its development. And though no speculative deduction of the attributes can be given, something is gained if it has been shown that they can be conceived in a manner consistent with the idea of God and his relation to the world.

CHAPTER XIII.

GOD AS PERSONAL AND ETHICAL.

The problem of the personality of God is of cardinal importance for a Philosophy of Religion. The sense in which God is thought to be 'personal' determines the view of the religious relation and the conception of the religious consciousness. There is a wide difference between a personal and an impersonal relationship. Reverence is possible between persons, but not between persons and things. On the level of spiritual religion the idea of God as personal and ethical is dominant, and this is clearly expressed in the character of the worship. Not mechanical service, but the personal tribute of the heart and will is tendered. The vitality of this religious consciousness is bound up with the conviction that the object of reverence is a personal Being.

Of course it will be said, and said truly, that the question has already been settled in a positive way in the foregoing chapters, which try to show that God must be conceived as Supreme Mind and Will. God, it was argued, must be self-conscious; and though there is something more in personality than is connoted by self-consciousness, still a being who is self-conscious can be spoken of without serious inaccuracy as personal. For practical purposes the one is often taken as equivalent to the other. "In calling him (God) personal I mean to assert that he is self-conscious, that he has that awareness of his own existence which I have of my existence."[1] It would, however, be more correct to say, that in calling God

[1] McTaggart, *Some Dogmas of Religion*, p. 186.

a self-conscious and self-determining Being we ascribe to him the essentials of personality. The element of will is implied in the notion of a personal subject. But while the preceding discussions have been directed to establish such a view of God, there are objections to this view which have not been met and difficulties which have not been considered. It would not be well to pass these by; and in dealing with them, it may be, we shall be able to define our own position better and to strengthen it. The critical and sceptical tendencies of modern thought render it particularly desirable, that a religious philosophy which treats God as personal should make clear the reasons by which it justifies itself. One can scarcely doubt that certain difficulties which attach to the idea of personality in God are influential in keeping alive the agnostic spirit.

A further point should be noted. Between the notion of personal and that of ethical an intimate relation subsists, and the one implies the other. A self-conscious individual who had neither ethical attributes nor entered into ethical relations, would not be personal in the full meaning of the word. We cannot think of ethical relations as real, unless they are the expression of and are sustained by personal wills. The significance and value of personality cannot be dissevered from the ethical element. For the self is thought and will in an indissoluble unity.

A.—God as Personal.

To say God exists, is a statement which does not convey much to us, unless we know what you mean by God. It makes all the difference in the world, whether the Being you call God is simply an unconscious substance, or a Spirit who knows, wills, and loves. For a person differs *longo intervallo* from a thing: a man may reverence the former, but he cannot worship the latter. Even in the humblest form of religion a thing must be more than a thing to possess any religious value. A person at the lowest is for himself and determines himself: he is not

mechanically moved by something else. In law the distinction of person and thing, *persona* and *res*, is clearly drawn. "A *persona* is thus a human being, but considered as invested with a certain function and social character; not a mere abstract human being, but one having a special place in the body politic, one who counts as something in the world."[1] With the idea of a person there goes, in common parlance, the notion of certain rights and privileges; hence we speak of a 'personal insult,' meaning thereby an infringement of the respect due to our person, the respect to which we are entitled; and we cannot separate the conception of personality from certain social and ethical implications. The practical and volitional side of personality is therefore important, and a person properly demands never to be treated as a thing. A great thinker summed up the character and claims of the ethical ideal in the famous saying: "Be a person, and respect others as persons."

We have often had occasion to remark that the human person is the outcome of development. The race slowly evolves personal selves, and the process is repeated in the individual. No one would dream of calling the infant 'new to earth and sky' a person; and the civilised man would demur if asked to regard the savage as a personality in the full meaning of the term. In fact, man begins his life in the form of an individual centre of conation and feeling, and only slowly and in a suitable environment develops into a full-fledged personality. Individuality is the basis upon which personality evolves, and a man is always an individual ere he becomes a person. And when we say this we make by implication the admission, that the concept person is not narrowly and precisely fixed. We cannot draw a hard and fast line in the process of growth, and say all above this is personal, all below is impersonal: like many other things personality is a matter of degree. The civilised man is more personal than the semi-civilised,

[1] Wallace, *Lectures and Essays in Natural Theology and Ethics*, 1898, p. 267.

and within the same society the man who conscientiously strives to realise what is implied in his station and its duties is more fully personal than the idle and indifferent individual.

The very fact that our human conception of personality has been linked with social and ethical elements has helped to raise a doubt whether the idea can apply to a Being who transcends the conditions of human life. The old dread of anthropomorphism shows itself, and it is argued with some force, that the factors which go to the making of a human person can have no relevancy to the nature of God. The point at issue is, whether personality is not a purely human category, therefore not to be applied legitimately to God. Some who say so have tried to show that the notion of God as a person is a natural form of representation at a given stage of social and religious culture, but is doomed to be transcended when men see better the human limitations which enter into the idea. God, it is urged, cannot be a One among many, and a centre of social relations like a mundane person. For instance, when we speak, in the way that popular religion does, of God forgiving, we indeed set him in a personal relation to ourselves; for the act of forgiveness is meaningless except between persons. But we are told that in speaking thus, we are transferring ideas which develop out of our social relations to a Being for whom these conditions are no longer valid.

Now it is true that God, on any showing, cannot be the counterpart of a human person, a mere magnified man. The transcendent aspect of the Divine Nature precludes this; and besides there are limitations in the personality of man which cannot exist in the Deity. The human self labours under defects of insight and memory, and its personal life fails of complete coherency and consistency. It never perfectly controls and penetrates its own content. Consequently, when we say that Deity must be personal in a higher sense than man is, we only state a truth which is demanded by the interests of religion itself. For the object of spiritual worship must be complete and perfect.

From this point of view there is even an element of right in the contention of those who declare that God, judged by the human standard, is supra-personal. On the other hand, whatever God may be, he must at least be self-conscious Mind and self-determining Will, if he is to be the object of personal reverence and love. The present writer sympathises with the view, that if God be not personal, in the sense of being self-conscious and self-determining, the whole development of the religious consciousness in man must be pronounced to be an illusion. No doubt there are those who are of another mind, and they are entitled to ask us not to *assume* a personal God. "If, in the past and the present, we find religion appearing to flourish in the absence of certain particular doctrines, it is not a light step to proclaim these doctrines as essential to religion. And to do this without discussion and dogmatically, and to begin one's work by some bald assumption, perhaps about the necessity of a 'personal' God, is to trifle indecently with a subject which deserves some respect."[1] The warning against dogmatism is justified, but the question remains whether religion does flourish in the absence of belief in a personal God. Surely not among the western peoples! as Positivism, for example, shows. No doubt there is the impressive and conspicuous instance of Buddhism among the races of the further East. But a nihilistic religion which, in the course of its development, idealises its founder and practically turns him into a deity, can hardly be taken for a convincing proof that a religion can thrive and yet dispense with a personal God.

But even though it were made plain that a vital religion requires a personal Object of reverence, it does not follow, it may be said, that philosophy can endorse this claim. Not every claim to truth is valid, and this particular claim may be the outcome of a figurative way of thinking which it is the function of philosophy to criticise and correct. Thus there is the standpoint of a

[1] Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, 1st ed., pp. 452–453.

theologian like Biedermann, who admits that the religious consciousness, which works with concrete forms of representation, appropriately depicts God in the image of a person. But under the solvent of speculative thought this image cannot maintain itself, and is replaced by the notion of an impersonal Spirit. Moreover, we are also told that it cannot be proved that a personal Deity is necessary to the perfection of a finite being.[1]

Though these arguments may not appeal to some, they may appeal to others, and it is well to treat them seriously. We have to ask, then, how the objections to a personal God, a God who is self-conscious and self-determining, can be successfully met. Now a good deal of this hostile criticism proceeds from those who hold the theory that God is the Absolute, or all-embracing Whole. German writers who have been influenced by Hegel, such as Biedermann and Von Hartmann, and speculative thinkers like Messrs. Bradley and Bosanquet in this country, take the view that personality involves a contrast and an opposition which must be transcended and transformed in the Absolute. In other words, personality is a development within the whole, a development which in the process of its expansion towards oneness with the Absolute overpasses the conditions which make it personal. Hence the Absolute, though it contains persons, is not itself a person, but still remains spiritual. So the inclusive unity exists for individual selves, yet these individual selves do not exist *for* the unity. Nevertheless, it is not the case that all those who accept, or in the main sympathise with, this speculative theory, agree in affirming the impersonal character of the Absolute. Hegelians of the Right who identify God with the Absolute speak of him as personal. Lotze, from another standpoint, has developed a suggestive argument to show that only in God as Absolute is there complete personality, while personality in man is but a broken and imperfect image of the Divine. Finiteness, Lotze insists, is not the determining principle of personality, but rather acts

[1] McTaggart, *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*, p. 74.

in the direction of restricting its full unfolding; for finitude spells incompleteness. He then labours to prove that only the Infinite and Absolute can be the complete person. It is noteworthy that a Personal Idealist, Dr. Rashdall, takes up a diametrically opposite position to Lotze, and declares that the conception of an Infinite Being is not compatible with the form of personality.[1] The present writer, however, has no call to justify the idea of a personal Absolute, for, according to the theory defended in these pages, God ought not to be identified with the philosophic Absolute. At the same time it is well to point out that, despite the subtlety and suggestiveness of his reasoning, Lotze's endeavour to vindicate the personality of the Absolute exhibits certain defects. The metaphysical and ethical aspects of the theory are not harmonised: on the metaphysical side all beings are reduced to parts of the one real Being or God, while on the ethical side a kind of existence outside God is claimed for individual spirits. The ethical demand for this is evident, but the line of thought by which Lotze establishes his speculative monism does not seem to admit of it. For you cannot concede that which you are not in a condition to give; and if there is only the one Reality, the being of finite spirits for themselves must be merely an appearance. The position here taken up, that God is Supreme Ground of existence and Creative Spirit, at least delivers us from the futile endeavour to reconcile the personality of the Whole with the separate personality of its parts. That Lotze should have thought this possible is due to the lingering influence upon him of a speculative tradition with which, in the main, he had broken.

But though the abandonment of the all-inclusive idea of God has freed us from one difficulty, other problems remain. In the end these all refer back to the old question, whether the idea of a person does not imply a limitation which, while it may well exist for men, cannot

[1] *Vid.* his essay, "Personality: Human and Divine," in the vol. *Personal Idealism*, p. 392.

exist for God. The human self is bounded and restricted in a way that the transcendent Ground of the world cannot be, and it is suggested that the Divine transcendency involves a passing beyond the conditions under which personality appears. In particular, it is urged that self-consciousness depends on the contrast and opposition of self and not-self; and while this condition applies to man, it cannot apply to God. For God is not a dependent and developing being, confronted always by something other than himself: he is the fundamental Reality, to which all other existences stand in a relation of constant dependence. His will does not develop over against a resisting environment, and his Self-Consciousness is intrinsic, not evolved. But to say this is to say there is a self-conscious Will which is not constituted by a relation to something other than itself. Can this conception be maintained and defended? In this connexion an argument of Lotze's is important, and if its validity is assured, the point of the objection that has been advanced will have been removed.[1]

Lotze begins by explaining that self-consciousness is not thinkable, if the spiritual subject is not able to form a mental representation of itself in its distinction from other selves. As a mental phenomenon this image-form has, of course, a psychological origin and conditions. But what Lotze makes clear is, that it is not the reflexion or return from the not-self which creates the individual's self-consciousness; for an original, if undeveloped, consciousness of self is presupposed in the act of distinguishing the non-ego from the ego, and forms the necessary basis for the existence of this contrast. The image of the self is already latent in self-feeling, and it is this original self-feeling which is the primary source of self-recognition. Self-recognition, again,

[1] Lotze's discussion of this subject will be found in his *Grundzüge der Religionsphilosophie*, pp. 37–46, and in his *Microcosmus*, Eng. tr., vol. ii. pp. 678–687. J. G. Fichte had argued that the consciousness of self depends on the antithesis of the not-self. In his reply to this, Lotze follows the lead of Krause.

makes possible the definition of the not-self. No doubt developed self-consciousness in man is the outcome of conceptual thinking, which is mediated by intersubjective intercourse within a social system. But the conceptual development posits an original basis of self-feeling on which to develop; and Lotze is quite right in saying that the general concept of self is equally applicable to every person, and affords no ground for distinguishing the *I* from the *thou* and the *he*. The fact that within the general concept we do distinguish ourselves from all others rests on a difference which is *immediately* given; and this is the unique self-feeling in virtue of which we identify the idea with ourselves. For the ego, as Lotze fully realised, cannot be reduced to the sum of its relations: a centre of immediate experience is the condition of there being relations at all.

If it be granted, as I think it must, that two concepts cannot derive their whole meaning from the relations in which they stand to each other, and that the self is not constituted by its relation to the not-self, it remains to ask what is the function of the non-ego in reference to the ego, and what is the bearing on the Divine Self of the conclusion to which we come. On this point Lotze's view is, that the position of the self is original and independent; that the ego becomes conscious of itself, not by reflexion from the not-self, but in contrast with its own changing states. He even denies that in sensation and perception we have more than our own inner states before us. To this the rejoinder is necessary, that more than these are involved. Still in a developed personality it is true that self-consciousness does not depend on any explicit reference to outward reality, and the self is recognised as the continuous identity which sustains its changing states and persists through them. On the other hand, it by no means follows that the development of the human subject to self-consciousness could be achieved apart from the mediation of the non-ego. That there is a *de facto* dependence of the finite mind on stimulus or excitation from without

Lotze grants, but he contends that such dependence is not to be deemed a note of all personality. May it not be the mark of finitude in selves that they have to depend for their development on impressions and stimuli which come to them from without? Lotze replies in the affirmative, and concludes that the finite stands in need of stimulation from the non-ego just because it does not contain the conditions of its own existence in itself. God, the complete and perfect Personality, is independent of this reference to something beyond himself. He is self-conditioned, and self-conscious in and for himself.

To this argument it has been objected: (1) that, though the isolated ego cannot be explained by the non-ego, it does not follow that the ego can be explained *without* the non-ego; (2) and the fact that the ego is more than its relations does not prove that these relations are not essential.[1] And it is true that, so far as our human experience and modes of representation testify, the idea of the self always carries with it the idea of the not-self. It is also beyond dispute, that the development of a human person requires the mediation of a reality other than itself in the shape of a world of existences and of other selves. But this does not prove that what is essential, when certain conditions are present, would be still essential when these conditions are absent. In other words, it does not follow that conditions which are implied in a personality which develops within a spatial and temporal world, would also hold of a perfect and complete Person who transcends the world. We must keep in mind the salient fact, that personality in man is and always remains defective, and so cannot be taken for the norm and type of all personal life. Human consciousness is not continuous, and the finite self never fully penetrates its own content. A vast deal of its experience remains in the region of the subconscious, and can only partially and intermittently be brought within the focus of consciousness. Some phases of our experience so fade into the dim background of our mental life, that

[1] McTaggart, *op. cit.* pp. 67–69.

we can no longer fully appreciate them and enter into them again. Other phases, though they continue living and active, move apart from the rest and do not cohere with the central and dominant current of the personal life. So the 'divided self' of Mysticism. This lack of complete unification is further shown by the possible disintegration of the self under abnormal or pathological conditions, as in the phenomenon of multiple personality. We trace the same defect in an ordinary feature of the moral life, which constantly exhibits a conflict between the so-called higher and lower self. These phenomena point to an incomplete fusion and interpenetration of the elements of personality. And we refer this imperfection to the fact that human personality is a process of growth, and depends on the co-operation of factors beyond itself. But this defective insight into and control over the elements which enter into its own life is a matter of degree even in the human self. With the increasing development of the spiritual activity in the historic process, a growth in personality is apparent in mankind, and there is progress towards internal completeness and consistency. When the spiritual self-consciousness of a man is at its highest level, the personal life attains a degree of inwardness that suggests the idea of a world of its own which is relatively independent of external impressions. And if personal development in man is a movement towards inner independence, the idea is certainly admissible that in a perfect and complete Person, such as we suppose God to be, this dependence on outer conditions no longer obtains. For God himself is the ground and sufficient-reason of his own states of consciousness. It is no objection that we cannot form a mental picture or *Vorstellung* of this Supreme Spirit; nay rather, it is what we should expect.[1]

To say that the foregoing argument leads to the thought, that a God who is a pure unity or abstract

[1] Rothe, I believe, has made the remark: "Our power of representation ceases when the thread of analogy with our experience breaks. It would be bad, indeed, if the power of thinking also stopped there."

identity could be self-conscious and personal, would be a misconception. For God at the least must contain within himself the differences which are implied in the contrast of changing states of consciousness with an abiding self. An absolutely identical consciousness is not conceivable, and if it existed would be without religious value. The thought of God as perfect Person is the thought of a spiritual Self which is fully self-determined, and contains within itself the wealth of differences that are necessary to a spiritual identity.

The Deity, as we have contended in an earlier chapter, is creative; he can invest the content of his Will with reality, though that reality always remains in ultimate dependence on himself. And while God in himself is a self-conscious Will, and does not become such in virtue of his creative activity, it is none the less true that man can best reach a living and concrete notion of the Divine Personality through the manifestation and expression of his Will in the created world. Apart from his self-revelation, God for human thought tends to become shadowy and elusive. This truth appears to be recognised in the theological doctrine that God is self-revealing, and discloses himself in his Word or Logos. God is apprehended in his personal character through the personal relations which he is conceived to enter into and maintain with the world and finite spirits. To recognise personal character in other men we must find the expression of their wills in action, and personal character in the Divine Being becomes clear to us in the same way. God's character for us means his way of acting towards us. When we try to represent God to ourselves in his eternal nature apart from the world and human souls, our thinking falls back into the region of metaphysical abstractions. When we strive to give concrete expression to the meaning that lies for us in the phrase 'Personal God,' we perforce envisage its significance in terms of those personal relations by which we think he manifests his mind and will to men. The personal God is the God whose Good purpose is

revealed in that teleological order which embraces in a living unity the world of existences and human spirits. The higher religious idea of God is, it may be added, not metaphysical: it is rather the idea of a God who reveals himself in and to the souls of men, and is active in the religious experience of the race. But while God in his personal character is best apprehended by our mind through his self-manifestation, his perfect Personality is the presupposition of this manifestation, not its result. God could not reveal himself as personal unless he were a Person.

Some speculative thinkers who suffer from a dread of anthropomorphism, and yet hold firmly to the spiritual view of the universe, argue that the spiritual can be separated from the personal. The Absolute, we are told, is spiritual, but is not personal. "The Absolute, although not personal, is nevertheless spiritual, and cannot, therefore, be out of harmony with the most fundamental desires of our own spirits."[1] One would like to have some cogent evidence that the personal and spiritual can be divorced in this fashion. It is not hard to understand that, if the philosophic Absolute is all the God there is, there are serious objections to associating with it the predicate of personality. But this, of course, does not show you can drop the word personal and still retain the adjective spiritual. It is no doubt true that there are stages in the evolution of mind which fall below the level of self-consciousness; but it is hard to suppose that a spiritual Absolute stands lower than its own differentiations. At all events if it does so, what ground is there for saying that it cannot be regarded as "out of harmony with the most fundamental desires of our own spirits"? There can be no guarantee that the universe responds to the deepest needs of self-conscious spirits, unless the universe reveals a teleological order which proceeds from an ultimate and self-conscious Will. For man's fundamental desires are desires which none but a personal spirit can have, and

[1] McTaggart, *op. cit.* p. 90.

there is no shadow of evidence that an impersonal system might not conflict with these desires. The sole assurance that the highest aspirations of man are met, not frustrated, lies in the principle that the Ground of the World is a self-conscious and self-determining Spirit. The claim of the religious soul that its God is personal, is not, therefore, merely a figurative and symbolic way of expressing its inner need. The truth of the religious experience itself is bound up with the conviction that God is personal; for religion cannot be true if there is no guarantee that its essential aspirations are not futile. Nevertheless, to say that God is supra-personal is not in itself anti-religious. It certainly is not so if what is meant is, that God is personal in a deeper, richer, and more perfect way than man is. For God is a supramundane and transcendent Being: he is beyond the limitations under which a human personality develops, and from which it can never completely escape.

B.—God as Ethical.

Of all the factors operative in culture, Ethics is the one which is most intimately allied to religion. Between the two there is constant interaction; and to maintain the validity of the ethical predicates which are applied to God is, without question, a matter of the first importance to religion. More directly than the metaphysical attributes these are involved in the practical working of the developed religious spirit. It is saying no more than the truth, to say that a God without ethical qualifications would be without religious value. The demand for ethical value in the Object of religious reverence springs from the very substance of the higher spiritual consciousness, and an enlightened humanity could not worship a non-moral Being. Recent thought has made us familiar with the idea of a realm which lies beyond good and evil. But even were this more than fancy, it is none the less true that the religious mind never transcends the distinction of good and evil. In fact, the validity of this distinction

is implied in the whole life and activity of the religious spirit. Of course, as we have explained at an earlier stage of this inquiry, the religious mind does not apply ethical qualifications to God by a process of inference or deduction. These are primarily postulates which embody religious values, and they stand for demands of the spiritual consciousness. In short, man does not argue himself into a belief in a moral God; but the whole spirit and tendency of his religious life, when that has reached the spiritual stage, imperatively calls for it. For the spiritual man the character of the religious experience ensures the validity of the demand. The great and enduring contribution which the Hebrew prophets made to the religious evolution of the race was, that they set forth with unsurpassed force their conviction that Jahveh was a righteous and holy God.

But a Philosophy of Religion has to discuss the truth of religion, and it has not discharged its full function if it merely describes and explains what the religious consciousness postulates and finds to be essential to its own working. It must at least critically examine the statement, that the moral point of view is purely a human point of view, and ceases to be relevant in relation to a Being who transcends the mundane order of things. Other problems which may arise are the coherency of the different ethical predicates affirmed of God, and the precise relation in which the Good stands to the Divine Will. These and other points call for mention at this stage. And I shall begin with the radical objection that God is a Being who is supra-moral, hence not to be clothed with ethical qualities drawn from human experience.

First of all, let me refer very briefly to the attitude of those who identify God with the Absolute. The Absolute, which includes everything, must include evil as well as good. On this theory you cannot say that moral evil is entirely wrong and ought not to be: at the worst it is good in the wrong place, and good and

evil are both transformed in the Absolute.[1] Inasmuch, then, as the Absolute transcends the opposition of good and evil, it can be properly called supra-moral. On these premisses it is fair to conclude, as E. von Hartmann does, that there are three stages of evolution, the natural, the moral, and the supra-moral. In the order of development, therefore, morality points beyond itself, and reaches its goal in the Absolute, where moral values are transcended. An Absolute so conceived can only be called good in the sense that it is a metaphysically perfect structure: it cannot be characterised by moral goodness as such. For the moral point of view in the last resort is abstract and partial, and things only appear to be good and evil to our limited outlook. If we accept the main principle of Absolutism we have no good reason to quarrel with the result, though that result is not consistent with the world-view of ethical and spiritual religion.

The theistic theory developed in these pages does not require us to spend our strength in trying to reconcile Absolutism with ethical religion. On the other hand, the transcendency of God has appeared to some a reason for doubting his ethical character. What has been said in the case of personality has been said in the case of ethical qualities. Objection has been taken to the anthropomorphism which, it is contended, is involved in applying them to God. From the naïve standpoint it is natural, and perhaps unavoidable, to predicate goodness and holiness of God, but it will not bear the brunt of criticism. The attributes we thus employ have meaning in the sphere of human relations, but lose their meaning when transferred to a Reality beyond them. When we speak of a moral God, we make God too much a man.

In reply, we may admit at the outset, that theologians have sometimes been uncritical in their procedure. For example, to say there is an opposition of justice and grace in the Divine Nature, is to suppose that what may be true in an imperfect human character can obtain in

[1] Cp. Bosanquet's *Value and Destiny of the Individual*, pp. 215–217.

a divine and perfect Personality. And in general we must remember moral values cannot have precisely the same significance in God which they have in man. But this concession by no means satisfies our opponents, and the demands they make are much more radical. Perhaps the substance of this hostile criticism might be put thus. Goodness has no meaning apart from evil: the one idea is the indispensable correlative of the other. Hence good always supposes some limitation, some resistance to be overcome: what offers opposition we call evil, and what overcomes it good. Consequently the sphere in which ethical qualities play a part is the sphere in which individuals develop through the conquest of opposing elements; and when we pass beyond the region of struggle and development, we pass beyond the region where ethical qualities are significant and valid.

In answering this argument let us repeat that the ethical attributes of God must have a deeper and richer meaning than the same qualities in man. Goodness in man is something which has been gradually and strenuously evolved; in God it must be intrinsic. That is to say, we cannot think of the Divine Being making himself good in virtue of his purposive action; to this extent the analogy of a being who develops morally by acting according to ends is defective.[1] Nevertheless we can fairly maintain the ethical Good to be the fundamental moral category, and only in relation to it can evil be determined as evil. For the norm or law is the prior condition, and defines and conditions the idea of a departure from it. A fundamental principle of goodness is therefore the condition of a good developing in the world over against evil. But now we are confronted with a problem discussed by the Scholastics and also by later theologians. Is the good good merely because God wills it? or does God will it because it is good? If

[1] On the whole subject the reader may compare with what is said above the acute remarks of R. A. Lipsius in his *Christliche Dogmatik*, 2nd ed., 1879, pp. 261–267.

we say the good is constituted by an arbitrary act of the Divine Will, we commit ourselves to the statement that goodness is not the intrinsic character of the Deity. And we involve ourselves in the objectionable consequence, that Deity, by a like act of will, could have made evil good. But if we say God wills the good because it is good, then we assert the priority of good to God himself. Neither supposition is tenable. The only way out of this dilemma is to say the essential nature of God is self-conscious Will, and this Will is intrinsically good. We thus evade the anti-religious alternatives of affirming the good to be higher than God, or of making it a mere creation of his will.

When we have come thus far we have come far enough to discern wherein lies the limitation of the human analogy. For the will to good in man is never perfect and complete. A perfectly good will is an ideal towards which the human self develops; and develops through the slow and hard process of subduing the lower motives and impulses. Hence goodness in man is ever the fruit of struggle and conquest, and the process of striving towards it never ends in full realisation. In contrast to this partial attainment the goodness we ascribe to God is perfect; it is characterised by no defect and therefore admits of no progress. Nor can we identify the ethical goodness of God with his metaphysical perfection, with perfection of structure, although the former may imply the latter; for there is a quality in the ethical will which is not exhausted by the metaphysical nature. Here the thread of the human analogy begins to fail us. In truth, we cannot make fully intelligible to ourselves, through our human modes of representation, the ethical goodness of the transcendent God. Perhaps the least misleading analogy would be the good-will in man which has so approximated to the ideal, that evil has well-nigh ceased to exercise an influence over it. In other words, the thought of a will to good in man which has become consolidated in character. Yet here again we labour

under the defect of trying to conceive what is inherently perfect through the image of something which is the outcome of development. There is the same difficulty, then, with the ethical as with the personal predicate when it is applied to God: we cannot completely apprehend the mode of its existence in a Being who transcends the world. But whatever element of perplexity attaches to the problem regarded from our human point of view, the perplexity would be far greater if we had to explain how an ethical world-order issued from an impersonal and non-moral source. The ultimate inexplicability of this, taken along with the positive demands of the religious consciousness, is our final justification for affirming that God is a perfect personal and ethical Spirit. This postulate makes our moral experience intelligible and guarantees the validity of the moral ideal.

In the case of God's personality we have seen that this becomes real and living to our minds through the personal relations into which he is conceived to enter with men. So likewise with the ethical attributes of Deity; the religious man apprehends them in a concrete way because he finds them revealed in the ethical order of the world. Apart from such a manifestation, goodness and righteousness in a transcendent Being remain for us abstract ideas with little power to evoke our interest or sympathy. The righteousness of God is real and significant to us, because we think of him as the Power in the world that makes for righteousness. To realise intimately that God is a moral personality, we must think of him sustaining the moral order of experience. Prompted by its own deepest needs, the religious spirit demands an ethical God. The demand in its essence is practical: it means the call for a God who maintains ethical relations with men, and works for good in the world. If we suppose there is no immanent working of God in the world of our experience, his ethical attributes of goodness, righteousness, and love become isolated qualities rather than living characteristics which evoke our affections and move our wills. Hence it is that

the higher spiritual religion—and especially the Christian religion—lays the greatest stress on the thought, that the character of God is known through the way in which he reveals himself. If Christian faith, for instance, proclaims that God is love, it does not do so on general grounds of reason: it rests its assurance on the historic manifestation of God redeeming and reconciling men unto himself. The Christian has a living notion of God as love, because he believes that God has made known his love. Similarly the holiness and righteousness of God are brought into close relation with God's revelation in Christ. For human powers the discussion of the ethical attributes of God will always prove a rather futile task, unless, and in so far as, they can be regarded as ways in which he manifests himself.

Hence the function of a Philosophy of Religion is a somewhat limited one, so far as the ethical attributes are concerned. Proof is out of the question, and philosophy must here be critical rather than constructive. Yet the critical function in such a matter is by no means without value, for it may help to purify faith from lower elements. The popular mind mistakes images for the truth, and human thought readily falls into illegitimate anthropomorphism. A Philosophy of Religion can exercise criticism here, and do something to ensure that ethical qualities which are applied to God are compatible with the theistic idea and consistent with one another. A service of this sort is by no means negligible. A religious philosophy which offers this service does something to promote a consistent conception of the God whom spiritual religion demands, a God fully personal and truly ethical.

To sum up the result of this discussion. Personal and ethical character, as they are developed in man, involve certain limitations. But these limitations are not necessarily involved in the conception of personality and of ethical character: they are due to the imperfect form in which personality and ethical character are realised under the conditions of mundane experience. Just because these conditions cannot apply to God, there is no inconsistency in

thinking of him as a perfect ethical Personality. On the other hand, because of the human limitations to which we are subject, the living knowledge of what God is as a perfect ethical Personality is only possible for us through the personal and ethical relations which God maintains with men in the experience of spiritual religion.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL.

A.—The Rise of the Problem.

In the lower levels of culture the existence of evil does not constitute a problem for man. He accepts the presence of evil in his environment without asking whether such a condition of things could have been avoided. His main and pressing concern is to evade or overcome the evils which threaten him in his struggle for existence; for the existence of evil in general he has no eye. The growth of reflexion, the formation of the idea of a world-system and a social order, provoked inquiry into the origin and meaning of evil within this order. Why did a fact so disconcerting intrude into the world, bringing misery in its train and thwarting human endeavour? Here, as in many other matters, it is easier to ask questions than to answer them; and this question is particularly hard. To explain evil would be in some fashion to rationalise it, and so to take the sting out of it. There is a saying of Lotze's in his *Microcosmus*, which is often quoted, and it will bear repetition. "No one," he says, "has here found the thought which would save us from our difficulty, and I too know it not."[1] But while a full explanation in the nature of the case is impossible, a careful discussion of the problem will shed a certain amount of light upon it. "The eye by long use," says Berkeley, "comes to see in the darkest cavern; and there is no subject so obscure but we may discern some glimpse of truth by long poring on it." And

[1] *Op. cit.*, Eng. tr., vol. ii. p. 716.

the meaning of evil is certainly a question where, at the most, we can hope for glimpses of truth, not for a finished and fully established understanding.

To our human experience, evil is essentially relative to good; to think of a virtue is to presuppose a vice as its counterpart, and the two ideas imply one another. If good develops within the system of culture, so does evil; and while virtue enters on new phases, vice assumes fresh forms. This close connexion of good and evil is fully experienced by the religious consciousness; and the good which religion yields man is sharply contrasted with the evils which hurt him. Whether in the form of deliverance from physical ills or of redemption from moral evils, man has sought help and strength from religion in his struggle with the opposing forces. His conception of the evils by which he was confronted naturally served to determine the notion of the meaning of religion and of the religious relation. In primitive culture material evils are exclusively in view, and the religion which is thought to deliver from these is conceived in a material fashion. Nor does the savage find any difficulty in explaining to himself the *raison d'être* of the evils which beset him. The goods and evils of life have their corresponding sources in the spirit world; and if there are beneficent spirits who are able and willing to help man, there are also malignant spirits to whose hostile action may be traced the ills of the human lot. So primitive man carries over the contrast of good and evil into the world of divine powers. The same principle is worked out in a more developed way by polytheistic religion. The conception of the unity of the world still remains in the background, and the departments of nature and its various forces have their own counterparts in the world of the gods. The forces in nature which cause man pain and loss, which undo his work and hamper his purposes, are conceived to be under the dominion of evil deities; and the same deity, here reflecting the inconsistency of his human worshippers, may at one time be active for good and at another for evil.

Up to this point we may say that evil has not become a specific problem for human thought. Men speak of evils rather than of evil, and they do not find any difficulty in supposing these proceed from evil gods. Hence there is nothing in early man's idea of nature and religion to make evil hard to understand. A change in the outlook is gradually brought about by the growing sense of the order and unity of the world which marks the transition to a monotheistic faith, or to a monistic conception of the universe. When man has gained some notion of an order which embraces all parts of nature, he can hardly help asking the meaning and origin of those forces which conflict with and thwart this order. The ancient Religion of Persia was a striking attempt to solve this question by tracing the antagonism back to the first principles of things. The conflict of good and evil, at first conceived in a purely natural way and represented by the warfare of the God of Light against the God of Darkness, was thought to run through and explain the history of the world. The dualism embodied in the idea of the perpetual battle between Ormuzd and Ahriman, the God of Good and the God of Evil, was only faintly qualified by the hope for the final victory of the Good. The Persian Religion shows us man at the stage when he has universalised the ideas of Good and Evil; but a final dualism of this kind means a conception of the universe unsatisfying and incoherent.

A monotheistic creed is not consistent with dualism; and it is for monotheistic religion that the problem of evil is defined most sharply and becomes most urgent. The order of the universe, physical and spiritual, is now traced to the will of a single Being supposed to be good, and it is a matter of much moment to understand the origin of those jarring elements which disturb the general harmony. Who is responsible for these discordant elements? Can the recurring ills of experience be reconciled with the religious postulate from which we set out? Can human suffering and loss be shown to be bound up with a larger

good? This is the problem which is stated in a vivid and impressive way by the Hebrew mind in the ancient drama known as the Book of Job. The harsh fortune and the pitiful case of the patriarch of Uz become a challenge to justify the ways of God to man. As the drama proceeds various solutions are put forward, but when the close comes no satisfying answer has been given. The problem once raised continues; and it reappears in the Christian Religion, where it is regarded in a new and more hopeful light. In the practical working of the Christian consciousness as it derives from Christ, sin and suffering are always related to salvation, and the redemptive function of religion is emphasised. Evil is in the world and abounds; but it can be overcome, for God is with men, and his spiritual power is supreme. But while this note of practical hopefulness marks the Christian's faith, it cannot be said that the doctrinal treatment of the problem of evil is free of difficulties. As a legacy from an elder stage of religious thought, there survives in theology the notion of a personal Power of Evil who fights against the Good. It is obvious enough that such a conception creates fresh perplexities instead of solving old ones. Nor is the story of the Fall, with the impossible importance which it assigns to a particular act, any real explanation of the origin of evil. As has been said, the story exhibits to us a typical case of sinning, but does not carry us further. Moreover, the total corruption of human nature is not consistent with human experience; nor, if it were consistent, could it be explained in the way suggested.

The general diffusion of evil has forced the philosophical theologian to seek some wider ground of explanation. Hints towards this are to be found in Plato, who saw his ideal realm confronted with the discords of real life. To account for this he suggested that the material factor in the world is not perfectly tractable to the idea, and in the form of the human body stirs up wrong passions and moral disorders. Neo-Platonism, as it is represented by Plotinus, follows out these hints of

Plato, and in a more positive and definite way connects evil with matter. Matter denotes the limit where form passes into the formless, light into darkness, and it is the original source of evil (*πρῶτον κακόν*). Evil which exists in the human body is a derivative product. The same idea that evil is inherent in matter was taught by the Gnostics, among whom we also find the suggestion that it was due to the imperfect agents whom the Highest God employed in the work of creation. Augustine, again, traced sin to a general perversion of the human will, issuing in a total depravity of human nature. The connexion of evil with man's will was developed by the theologians of the Middle Ages. The problem was how to avoid making God responsible for the fact of sin in the world. The Scholastic theologians assumed that man was originally created good; at present he was admittedly bad. How did he become other than he was when created? Must he not always give expression to the nature with which he was endowed? The solution was found by postulating a metaphysical act of free-will by which man changed the nature with which he had been gifted at the first. The theory which connects moral evil with human freedom has been influential in theology, but it has not been universally accepted by theologians. Among the Reformers, for instance, Calvin maintained the doctrine of theological determinism, for it was the doctrine which was consistent with his view of Predestination.

The modern attitude on this problem, like other problems, has been greatly influenced by the prevailing conception of evolution. So the question has assumed a wider scope: instead of merely asking how evil is to be understood as a feature in the existing situation, the modern thinker tries to understand it as part of a development. He strives to show that the elements of evil which play a part in the growing life of the individual and the race are more intelligible when studied in their bearing on the evolutionary process. And no doubt it is often helpful to regard the problem in this light. Some things

which are certainly evil in a given situation and for a particular individual, when seen in the larger perspective of racial development, are recognised to work for good on the whole. Hitherto we have spoken of evil or evils, but before going further it is essential to draw a distinction in order that the discussion may be clear and profitable. We must distinguish between natural and moral evil.

B.—Natural and Moral Evil.

According to the old theological doctrine, moral evil came first in time, and natural evil was added as a penalty for human transgression. 'Death and all our woe' were the fruits 'of man's first disobedience.' This is a reversal of the right order. Natural evil was in the world and abounded before sin was known. Broadly speaking, we term natural evils the evils which are involved in the course of nature, and affect, not only man, but all other finite creatures as well. Moral evils, again, are those which spring, directly or indirectly, from the exercise of the human will, and are made possible by the activity of conscious beings. On the face of it, to identify these two kinds of evil would be a grave mistake, though a little consideration shows there is a connexion, more or less close, between them. But while it is not absurd to argue that man is responsible for the existence of moral evil, it is absurd to say he is responsible for natural evil.

Let me preface some remarks on natural evils by quoting a few sentences from J. S. Mill's well-known essay on "Nature." "In sober truth, nearly all the things for which men are hanged or imprisoned for doing to one another, are Nature's everyday performances. Killing, the most criminal act recognised by human laws, Nature does once to every being that lives. . . . Next to taking life . . . is taking the means by which we live; and Nature does this on the largest scale and with the most callous indifference. A single hurricane destroys the hopes of a season; a flight of locusts or an inundation

desolates a district; a trifling chemical change in an edible root starves a million of people."[1] Though Mill's picture may be highly coloured, no one doubts that the operation of so-called natural laws entails many evils. These evils are spread alike through the human and sub-human or animal worlds, and this fact must not be forgotten. A theory, for instance, which explained death as a consequence of human transgression, breaks down when confronted with the universal reign of death in the animal world. Pain, disease, and death, these great natural ills, fall to the lot of all living creatures, and are the cause of the most varied forms and degrees of suffering. Nor can this be said to be merely an accidental result of the mode in which nature works. These evils appear to be bound up with the structure and organisation of the natural world. Implicated with life is susceptibility to pain, and in all organic process elements are present which make for dissolution. Nature herself produces freely the bacilli which carry far and wide the germs of disease and death. She has created a multitude of creatures, and equipped them with organs, that they may prey on other living things and flourish by killing and devouring them. Man himself thrives on the flesh of the animals he has slain to satisfy his hunger. Hence the well-being of some means the suffering and death of other forms of life. Moreover, the 'laws of nature' in the course of their working occasionally cause dire havoc. The tidal wave, the volcanic outburst, the earthquake, sometimes deal destruction to thousands of human lives, and leave appalling misery in their train. In presence of such catastrophes, or watching the slower ravages of some malignant disease, men inevitably ask themselves how it is possible to find an element of good in what seems so utterly bad. If they are told these visitations work for good in the long run, they ask, for the good of whom? Does such suffering benefit the people themselves or those who come after them?

[1] *Three Essays on Religion*, 1885, pp. 28, 30.

Perhaps the chief difficulty created by natural evils of experience concerns the mode of their distribution. To one who looks out on the world assuming that it is the manifestation of a moral order, it seems impossible to affirm that these ills are apportioned among human beings in accordance with any principle of justice. Adversity and prosperity often bear little relation to character, and, as in the days of the Psalmist, the wicked sometimes flourish 'like a green bay tree.' The vagaries of fortune are proverbial. The man of genius is cut off in the freshness of his youth ere his gifts have ripened, while the dull and commonplace person is spared to a good old age: the industrious father of a family is smitten down by disease when his help could least be spared, while the selfish idler enjoys excellent health. It is not necessary to multiply instances, for every one can furnish them from his own knowledge of life. The stress of the problem begins to be felt when you try to find some meaning, some element of good, in particular cases. To show that death as a universal principle operates for the well-being of humanity does not make it plain why the honest man should be laid low in the fulness of his service, and the profligate spared to continue in his sin. The general principle sheds little light on particular instances.

Natural evils are closely related to moral evils, and they furnish the occasion for the development of the latter. Hunger, want, pain, indeed suffering in all its phases, stimulate the self to activity, and where these reactions bear a distinctive character, moral evil emerges. Had there been no natural evils felt by the self, there would have been no moral transgression, for the will would have lacked the incitement to do wrong. Nevertheless, ills like pain, want, ignorance could not of themselves grow into moral evils; to bring about this the activity of the personal will is necessary. It is the supervention of this will on the natural impulses and desires which transforms the merely sensuous into the moral action. Man's native tendency is to satisfy these

impulses; such as, for example, the impulse to self-preservation. But when many are united in a social system, the impulses and desires of individuals must be harmonised and made consistent with the good of the whole. So out of the social order the conception of a law or norm for the will defines itself; and the act of the will in transgressing this norm takes on the character of moral evil. The will which refuses to identify itself with the norm is anti-social in spirit, it is self-will; and it is self-will which converts the self-conserving instinct into moral selfishness. Step by step with the development of the ethical will there goes the development of moral obligation, and the consequent growth of the notion of moral evil. And when the moral law is placed under the guardianship of a divine Power or Powers, then moral evil assumes that religious significance which is commonly expressed by the word sin. For sin means a transgression of, or a failure to conform to, the law of God rather than the law of man; and that is made possible by the existence of self-conscious beings who possess the capacity of rational choice.

When we ask at what point in the evolution of the human species natural was transformed into moral evil, we are putting a question to which no definite answer can be given. Nor is the question one of any practical importance. It is the fact that sin exists which matters, not when it began to exist. But we ought to remember that sin can only develop within a social system or order, and that, from the first, it has a social significance. Now in virtue of the living or organic character of society, moral evil cannot be restricted to a particular point or points, but always tends to diffuse itself through the system, much in the way that a disease affects the condition of the whole body. The individual cannot so 'trammel up the consequence' even of a single act of wrong, that the issue will concern himself alone; and the sin of a section of a community reacts upon the rest. Moral evil develops into a power in society which in-

fluences modes of thought and habits of life, and leaves its impress on institutions. Hence sin comes to function as a collective force, maintaining itself from generation to generation, and offering a constant resistance to the progress of the good. Proteus-like it takes new forms in the course of the struggle with advancing culture. What were virtues in the savage may be transformed into vices for the civilised man; and if growing civilisation fosters new types of moral excellence, these are balanced by fresh forms of moral evil. The battle is a continuous and wearing one, because the forces of goodness are doomed to wage war against an elusive enemy who, if beaten in one quarter, only withdraws to reappear in another, ready to renew the fight. So the strife prolongs itself, assuming new forms and phases as the generations come and go, yet never crowned by a final victory.

The far-spread effects of sin, and its tragic results on human life, are not intelligible apart from its collective character. It becomes a subtle and pervasive influence, diffusing itself through the social structure, so that it is a hopeless task merely to attack it at single points. The redemption of individuals will not suffice while the sources of infection still remain. More and more the modern mind is realising the significance of the environment in propagating sin, and its power in fostering and sustaining sinful habits. And the exceeding difficulty with which all who strive for the moral regeneration of society have to contend is this fact, that young and growing lives are infected with evil from their environment before they are fully conscious of its meaning, or have developed the capacity of resistance. Long ere they have reached the maturity of their powers sinful habits have developed and become fixed, so that they exercise a constraining influence on the will, and the task of overcoming them has been rendered tenfold more hard. *Nemo repente fit turpissimus*: many degraded beings have absorbed sin early, gradually, and almost unconsciously from their surrounding so that it is impossible to say how far they are

responsible for what they have come to be. How vast is the difference in spiritual opportunity between a life growing up in an environment of grace and another growing up in an environment of sin! Here again we have a problem in the distribution of moral evil similar to that which existed in the case of natural evil.

The question of the origin of moral evil or sin, like other questions of origin, is susceptible of a twofold interpretation. It may be taken to mean how sin came to enter the human mind, or it may be taken to signify the ultimate origin or cause of sin. In the one case we have a problem of psychological genesis, in the other a problem of metaphysical explanation.

(1) The psychological genesis of sin is much the easier problem, and to some extent an answer to it has been given in the foregoing pages. Moral guilt in the full sense can only exist where a self-conscious subject distinguishes itself from its natural impulses and desires, and reflects upon them. To be capable of sinning a being must be capable of rational choice. It is when man is conscious of the good in the form of a law or general principle of obligation, that the notion of moral wrong or transgression of the law develops in his mind. The consciousness of sin is present in a man when he recognises a norm or rule to which he ought to conform, and is aware that he has broken the rule, or has failed to do what he ought to have done. In primitive culture the custom of the tribe is the germ from which the conception of a moral law afterwards evolved; and the breach of the custom, with the consequent dread of magical ills, is the far-off precursor of the civilised man's moral offence and the rebuke of conscience which he experiences. But neither in the case of the individual nor of the race can we fix precisely a point in the temporal development at which the purely natural consciousness passes into the moral consciousness. Indeed, with the individual it is unfortunately true, as already noted, that the germs of moral evil, in the form of wrong tendencies and desires, are present in him before he is

clearly conscious of their significance. The doctrine of the depravity of human nature has this grain of truth in it.

(2) The metaphysical problem is the crucial problem of moral evil. The question here is not about the way in which the consciousness of sin developed: it is the question why should sin exist in the world at all. Is this hostile element necessary or accidental? Is it involved in the structure of the world, or was it somehow introduced into it? Those who put these questions bring with them a fundamental postulate or assumption. The postulate is that the Good should rule in the universe, and mundane experience ought to be a harmonious whole which excludes the presence of such antagonistic forces. If that be so, the problem is to understand why the universe fails to conform to what is best. If that failure is not due to intrinsic defect, is it owing to causes which an all-wise God could have prevented, had he so willed? These are questions which each generation puts to itself, and strives to answer as best it can. The optimistically minded conclude that the world is a good world, and sin is entirely subordinated to the good. The sceptic and the pessimist are very sure this is not the 'best of all possible worlds,' and ought to be much better in the interests of human happiness—

> "Ah Love! could you and I with Him conspire
> To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
> Would not we shatter it to bits—and then
> Remould it nearer to the Heart's Desire!"

Others, and these perhaps more humble-minded, cling to the faith that the world, despite its burden of suffering, manifests an increasing good. The whole stress of the Problem of Evil is felt most keenly by the theist, who has to reconcile the existence of evil with his postulate that the universe is the creation of a God who is good. Hence the attempts, made in a religious interest, to show that evil can in some way be explained and proved to be consistent with the ultimate well-being of the universe which is the object of the Divine Will. This is the task to which the name Theodicy has been given.

C.—Theism and the Existence of Evil.

For the atheist or the agnostic evil may present a problem, but it is not so urgent and perplexing a problem as it is for the theist. For they are spared the difficulty of reconciling facts that are bad with a source which is presumed to be good. Indeed, we frequently find it put forward as a reason against belief in a God who is good, that the misery and sin of the world are inconsistent with the idea. To some minds, for instance, it is a conclusive objection to the Christian conception of a Father in Heaven, that, if such a Being existed, he would assuredly have made a better world than this. Hence to those who hold firmly to the theistic postulate the fact of evil is a kind of challenge, a challenge they dare not ignore and must try to meet as best they can.

Of the solutions to this momentous problem which have been offered, the dualistic solution—the theory that there is in the universe a Power or Principle, personal or not, in eternal opposition to God—is generally discarded by the modern mind. It is really a survival of an older and ruder phase of thought, and adds to the difficulties of the subject instead of lightening them. Such a dualism is not compatible with a genuinely spiritual and theistic conception of the universe.

What is called the metaphysical explanation of evil is far more relevant and important. The best known exposition of this theory is that of Leibniz. In his *Monadology* he remarks that "created beings derive their perfections from the influence of God, but their imperfections come from their own nature, which is incapable of being without limits."[1] And in his *Théodicée* he tries to work out the notion, that the imperfection which is inherent in finite things is the source of the evil in the world, and not the will of God. This is 'the best possible world,' says Leibniz; but even in such a world the limitations, and consequent imperfections, of its elements

[1] Latta's translation, p. 240.

involve the existence of evils. These evils, however, in comparison with the good, are relatively small,—here Leibniz's optimism shows itself—and they may be compared to the discords which enter into and enhance the beauty of a complete musical movement. So far as natural defects and physical evils like pain are concerned, Leibniz finds they can be reconciled with the purpose of a benevolent God, because they are necessarily implied in a world of finite existences. In regard to moral evil, he tends in the end to trace it back to defect or limitation, in other words, to identify it with metaphysical evil. The line of thought developed by Leibniz has been followed by those who seek to explain evil as a necessary constituent in the complex whole of experience. The keynote of all these theories is the necessary imperfection of the finite.

The theory we have been describing is more successful in shedding light on natural than on moral evils. In the case of natural evils we can, I think, find some explanation and justification of their existence within the present order of experience. Such things as ignorance and failure to attain ends are implied in the nature of finite beings, who are limited by one another and the larger system of which they are elements. The world of life, and more especially the world of spiritual life, is a developmental process, and the natural order or system must be such as to form a basis for that process. The so-called 'laws,' or rather the 'uniformities,' which obtain in nature are necessary to the existence of human life; and this is at once apparent when we reflect how impossible it would be for man to maintain himself in the world, were there not a constancy, and therefore reliability, in the processes of nature. The operation of the principle of gravitation is necessary to the planetary system and the mundane order, yet in its working it sometimes means destruction to man and his labours. Still, who can doubt that it works for good rather than ill? Whatever loss to man the operation of these uni-

formities may occasionally entail, their continuous action makes possible the co-operation of human minds, and is the condition of human progress. Again, in limited and conditioned lives, pain is not a pure evil, for it plays a useful and even a necessary part in organic development. The experience of pain warns the animal that its life is threatened, and stimulates it to defend itself: it is the indispensable correlate of pleasure, which is the token of healthy vitality. The pangs of hunger impel man and the lower creatures to exert themselves for their own good; and without the spur of want man would never have moved forward in the path of self-development. A painless body and a perfectly tractable environment would have meant no progress. We therefore conclude that pain, though its evils are patent, is necessarily involved in the organisation of life, and its action on the whole is beneficial. Even the struggle for existence, with all the harshness and suffering it entails, materially contributes to the health and efficiency of living beings. These and other natural ills are not inconsistent with the idea, that a good purpose is being realised under the necessary limitations of an orderly world of co-existing individuals.

Of death, the greatest of natural evils, the same may be said. It is implied in the structure of multicellular organisms and in the reproductive function, and life would not be practicable without it. To the individual in the morning freshness of his powers, death is commonly felt as a great hardship; but when the race is run and the labour ended, it comes as a quiet and fitting close of the human day—

> "Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde.
> Warte nur, balde
> Ruhest du auch."

To be condemned to immortality under mundane conditions would be a fate more terrible than death.[1] From

[1] Tennyson has expressed this thought in his poem "Tithonus."

the evolutionary standpoint we can say that death is an indispensable means to the historic life. The advance of age gradually diminishes the developmental capacity of the individual, and he becomes inhospitable to new ideas. Fixity is avoided and development ensured by each generation handing over its heritage and labours to a younger race, who bring fresh minds and unjaded powers to the task of progress. Development demands the succession of the generations and the law of mortality.

There is no objection to our saying that natural evils are willed by God; yet they are not willed as ends, but as means to a greater good. Apart from them much good that is in the world would not be realised. At the same time it is too much to say that no mystery gathers round these evils, and that their operation is always intelligible. The problem of evil becomes baffling, when we turn from general and impersonal reflexions to consider particular cases. We have previously noted the perplexity occasioned by the distribution of natural evils. It is better to confess openly that there are instances of these evils where, so far as we can see, we cannot say they are instrumental in bringing about a greater good. But though all is not clear, we discern enough to feel reasonably sure that the natural evils of experience have a purpose to serve, and are not inconsistent with the development of the good on the whole and in the long run.

When we pass to consider the relation of moral evil to the divine government of the world, the problem becomes graver. The theist who asserts the ethical and spiritual character of God, shrinks from making God directly responsible for sin. To say that God wills the good and also wills what is bad seems to import an unbearable contradiction into the Divine nature. What is justly accounted a defect in the creature cannot surely be right in the Creator! And yet on theistic premisses is it possible to absolve God from all responsibility for evil? He at least brought into existence the conditions

which made moral as well as natural evil possible, and he could not have done so in ignorance of the issue. We shall be told, that to say that a Being who merely permits an evil, or does not prevent an evil which he could have prevented, is in no way responsible for it, savours more of sophistry than common candour. In the case of natural evils we found it practicable to say, they were conditionally willed by God as a means to a wider good. Now, inasmuch as natural and moral evils are connected, it might appear to follow that sin is also conditionally willed by God.[1] Still in the instance of natural evils it was feasible to affirm that they were a means to good. Is it possible to say the same of moral evils? Can we maintain that God wills sin as instrumental to goodness? There would be no insuperable objection in maintaining this, if it could be shown that moral evil really subserved the cause of goodness, and that it was a useful factor in the rational organisation of the world. At this stage we shall consider one or two attempts, since the time of Leibniz, to rationalise moral evil.

For Hegel the real is the rational; and he strives to prove that sin has its rightful place in a universe which is essentially good, because essentially rational.[2] Like Leibniz, Hegel thinks sin attaches to the nature of the finite being, but he brings it into a close and suggestive connexion with the principle of development. The key to the Hegelian theory is the antagonism in the subject due to its finite-infinite nature; and the solution of the contradiction is found in the idea of development. From naïve innocence, through sin, man rises to those formed habits of virtue in which his spiritual freedom consists.

[1] Dr. Rashdall, in his *Theory of Good and Evil*, 1907, vol. ii. p. 345, takes up this position, though he grants it would be more satisfactory to be able to say God was in no sense the cause of evil.

[2] Hegel's view is stated in his *Phil. der Religion*, 1840, vol. ii. pp. 258–280. Dr. McTaggart expounds Hegel's theory in an essay on "Sin" in his *Studies in Hegelian Cosmology*.

Hegel sees clearly enough that sin is a matter of the *will*, and he refuses to call a man good who merely exhibits that harmony of nature which appears in beings without will. Nor does he deny the difference between sin and virtue. But he certainly holds sin has a justifiable place and function. It forms a necessary stage to self-determined virtue: it is therefore 'good in the making,' and contributes to the harmony and perfection of the whole. Quite in the same spirit English writers like Messrs. Bradley and Bosanquet treat the problem of moral evil. Thus Mr. Bradley assures us that, though sin is a discord, yet "the discord as such disappears, if the harmony is made wide enough."[1] And Professor Bosanquet speaks just as definitely in the same sense. "Evil, one might say, is good in the wrong place." "There is nothing in evil which cannot be absorbed in good and contributory to it; and it springs from the same source as good and value."[2]

There are elements of truth in what, speaking broadly, we may term the Hegelian view of sin. To bring the notion of moral evil into close relation with the idea of development is a step in the right direction. It is likewise true that sin is something to be fought and overcome by the progressive endeavour of human wills. On the other hand, the positive and really detrimental character of moral evil is not rightly recognised. For sin is treated as a negative and transitional moment in the evolution of self-conscious spirits, and therefore enters definitely and necessarily into the development of the spiritual life. The way to virtue lies through sin. That sin appears to be a jarring discord is only the case when it is regarded from a lower and partial point of view. In short, sin, on this theory, has its own legitimate place in human life, and you cannot truly say it stands for something which ought not to be. On this point we join issue. That moral evil is a step to the development of a higher good

[1] *Appearance and Reality*, 1st ed., p. 202.
[2] *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, pp. 209, 217.

may sound plausible so long as you remain in the region of the universal and impersonal. It ceases to be so when you examine the concrete facts. Whose good does the existence of sin subserve? A wrong-doer does not benefit his neighbours by his wrong-doing! Does sin prove a good to the sinner himself? It will hardly be maintained that the youth who forsakes the ways of innocence and plunges into profligacy and crime, and who afterwards overcomes his evil habits, is necessarily a better man for his experience. He may really be weaker, and practical knowledge of this kind is a doubtful benefit at the best. Nor is it needful to plunge deep into sin ourselves in order to experience that reaction against it which is a stimulus to earnest well-doing. And no one can honestly say that the crime and vice, which find a place in every great city, prove a blessing to any individual or class in the community. The opposite is true. In fact, to say that sin is 'good in the making' is to transform the character of sin, to change it into something better than it is. A dispassionate survey of the effects of sin on society and on the individual leads to the conclusion that it is a positive evil rather than an instrument of good; not a discord which brings out the harmony, but something which mars it.

I have said it was a merit to bring the conception of sin into connexion with the idea of development. But the theory of development expounded by absolute idealists makes it impossible to do justice to the nature of moral evil. On this view development, alike in its physical and spiritual forms, is a process of explication, determined in all its stages and excluding anything in the nature of new beginnings. Man's nature contains the promise and potency of the end in the beginning; and though the realisation of the end posits the activity of the self-determining will, it is not an activity which leaves room for any open choice of alternatives or for any real contingency. No doubt, if you insist that the universe is through and through a rational whole, then you must

make out somehow that sin is a rational moment in the human experience which falls within the universe. But the gospel of perfect rationality fares badly in the face of concrete facts; and as we have often insisted, the very idea of rationality is relative to the unrationalised. The theist, in the face of the facts of moral experience, cannot follow this line of thought, when he seeks to harmonise the existence of sin with God's moral government of the universe. It remains to ask, therefore, whether, in connecting sin with personal wills, we are not implying a principle of freedom which, to some extent at least, removes the responsibility for moral evil from God and lays it on man.

D.—Human Freedom and Evil.

A theistic theory of the universe which affirms the divine creative activity, in so doing asserts a responsibility on the part of God for the world he has created. A Deity who creates beings that may sin, and who in fact do sin, must be held to be, so far, responsible for the consequences of his creative action. At the least he has made possible the evil he could have prevented. But if we accept a deterministic conception of human conduct, we must go further than this—we must say that God, though himself ethically perfect, directly willed the existence of moral evil, even although he willed it as a means to good. For in this case man's actions would proceed necessarily from his original nature; and the development of sin in the world would flow inevitably from the character of man as it reacted to the stimulus of experience. Granted that this is so, it seems hard to come to any other conclusion than that the existence of sin is due to the direct action of God. In willing the being of man he also willed the existence of sin. And the conclusion, it need hardly be said, would be hostile to the interests of ethical religion.

It seems needful, therefore, to discuss again the time-

worn problem of human freedom, in order to make clear how far man has a responsibility for the presence of moral evil in the world. Responsibility for *natural* evils on man's part is, of course, not in question.

Before proceeding further it is essential that we should agree about the sense in which we use the word *freedom*, for some discussions of the subject suffer from ambiguity on this point. Certain thinkers regularly use the term freedom to signify the harmonious realisation of the good in human character. To be free in this way means that man attains to his self-fulfilment, realises his true idea. In this sense history has been called the development of freedom, the gradual and progressive fruition of human capacities and powers. Freedom, so conceived, denotes an ideal rather than an accomplished fact. For man in this life never reaches a perfect and complete self-realisation. It is also clear that freedom, in this large meaning, does not bear intimately on the problem of responsibility for sin. The other use of freedom refers directly to freedom of choice and the meaning which attaches to it. About the fact of choice there is no dispute, but there has been much controversy whether the alternatives presented to the will in a given case are really open or not. In other words, might the individual who has elected to do evil have chosen to do good instead? It will make a decided difference to our view of human responsibility for sin, according as we answer this question in one way or the other; and this must be our plea for entering on a threadbare dispute.

The extreme denial of human freedom takes the form of mechanical determinism, or, as the late Prof. James termed it, 'hard determinism.' On this theory it is an illusion that man is free to choose one object rather than another, or that he can make his actions in any way different from what they are. The rigid necessitarian tells us that a man's deeds follow strictly from motives, and his motives are determined by his nature and his environment. Motives, thus springing from the situation, act and react on one another in a *quasi* mechanical fashion, and

in the result the strongest motive always prevails and brings about the corresponding act. There is no contingency anywhere: the deed results inevitably from the conditions, and human conduct conforms as rigidly to law as a physiological process or the movements of a body under gravitation. That the individual will can alter the course of events is an illusion. If mechanical determinism is true, the individual is no more responsible for his good or evil deeds than he is for his stature or the colour of his hair. But the fallacies of this theory are transparent, and there are not many thinkers who would now rigorously defend it. Determinism of this sort ignores the all-important activity of the self in choosing and in willing, and makes the process of deliberation superfluous and unmeaning. For why should we deliberate, if the strongest motive will always assert itself by its own inherent force? Again, it is a serious error to say that motives and acts are related by mechanical causality: the use of this category in the spiritual sphere is psychologically false. Only by a thoroughly bad abstraction can motives be treated apart from the self; for they spring from the character of the self and represent its activity. Without knowledge of the man himself you can never understand his motives in any concrete situation. And to speak of motives interacting is absurd, unless you fully recognise that such so-called interaction falls within the activity of the central and sustaining self. In short, 'hard determinism' makes the personal consciousness of freedom utterly inexplicable, and it is condemned by its failure to comprehend the indispensable part played by the self in all volition.

A second, and a much more adequate theory, is that which identifies freedom with self-determinism. Prof. James has called it 'soft determinism' to distinguish it from hard or mechanical determinism. The supporters of this theory admit fully the dominant part played by the self in all acts of rational will, and they duly recognise that motives apart from the self can have no dynamic

efficiency. Man deliberates and chooses, and by deliberation and choice he makes clear to himself and decides what he really wants, thus consciously realising his purpose: otherwise he would not be responsible for his action. But in every act of choice man reveals his character as a whole in its relation to the specific situation. In willing, the individual expresses the character he has formed as it bears on the particular circumstances with which he is called to deal. Freedom just means that man is not determined *ab extra*: the individual determines himself; and by the individual is not meant a bare self, but the self with a definite content. Action therefore flows from character, and open possibilities do not exist. Nevertheless, to have to act as our character determines is no sacrifice of freedom: it is self-determination, the character being the concrete self. It is futile for man to expect a freedom which is independent of his own nature. The apostles of self-determinism clinch their arguments in self-defence by a shrewd criticism of the libertarian theory. There is no such thing as a pure liberty of indifference, the full power to do or leave undone, to choose *a* instead of *b* or *b* instead of *a*. Experience does not endorse any such claim; and if the claim were good it would mean that the connexion of character with conduct was cut, for any motive might be made to prevail by the mysterious power of free-will. The disruption of the connected whole of character, conduct, and motives would be fatal to human reliability and responsibility. "If the indeterminist is right, we have no reason to expect any line of conduct from any one, rather than any other line of conduct which is physically possible."[1]

From the standpoint of rationality the upholder of self-determinism can make out a fairly strong case for his theory. Yet some important considerations can be brought forward on the other side.

(1) We have to point out that merely to act in accordance with character is no pledge of freedom, and

[1] McTaggart, *Some Dogmas of Religion*, p. 183.

does not serve to distinguish the man who is master of himself from the man who is mastered by his passions. The veriest slave of evil habits acts in harmony with the character he has formed. Freedom, on the self-determinist view, does not admit of open possibilities: at each point in his life a man acts in the only way he could act, and when you trace his development you mark how his conduct issues constantly from his character in its connexion with his circumstances. Now when you follow backward the development of the individual in time, you find that moral acting gradually passes into a stage when conduct was natural and non-moral. But if the growing self can never elude its causal connexion with the past, if there never comes a point when it can initiate a new movement by an act of freedom, it becomes a puzzle to understand how the moral emerges from the non-moral and wins its distinctive quality. On the theory we are criticising, moral character runs back in a determinate line of development to elements which are not moral. The inference is that moral character is the issue of natural conditions.[1]

(2) Again, if you accept the self-determinist theory which denies the existence of open possibilities in experience, how are you to explain fully facts like regret and repentance? It is no doubt true to reply, that the state of mind signifies sorrow on the part of the individual because his character was such that he acted in the way he did; and if the deed proceeded from a purely arbitrary act of will, it would have no moral significance. If, too, the act expressed no element or elements in the character of the doer, there would not be any ground for personal regret. All this is true, yet not a sufficient explanation. On the other side it must be pointed out, if our act issued necessarily from our character in the given situation, if we could not have willed otherwise than we did, our repent-

[1] To avoid this conclusion and still uphold a spiritual determinism, some have argued for a self which is ultimate, uncreated, and eternal, and so lies behind the whole temporal development of character. So Prof. Howison in his *Limits of Evolution*.

ance for it would not be explicable. The sting of repentance does not simply mean that our feelings now are at discord with our feelings when we sinned: it also implies that we might have acted differently, that we ought to have done so and did not. With keen regret there always goes the belief that something better was possible. This is confirmed by the fact, that the more fully a man is persuaded that, in the circumstances, he could not have done otherwise, the less is his regret for the wrong done.[1]

(3) In coming to an opinion on this problem we are, I think, entitled to lay stress on the immediate consciousness of freedom we enjoy at the time of acting. In the vast number of acts which have become habitual a man simply acts without reflecting whether he is free or not. But when there is conflict of motives and deliberation, the great majority of people believe that, in choosing, the possibility is open between different lines of action, and also that they could will or refrain from willing.[2] The active self is directly experienced as a free cause; and to say that character determines conduct is meaningless, unless you mean by that the self which wills. Character, apart from the self which owns it, is an abstraction. One must point out that, when you reconstruct the process of willing in thought and envisage it in conceptual space and time, you alter the immediate experience. Instead of the 'flow of concrete duration' you represent a succession in time where effects follow causes, and these in turn follow other causes, after the fashion of the transeunt causality we attribute to nature.[3]

[1] "I admit that so far as the sentiment of remorse implies self-blame irremovably fixed on the self-blamed, it must tend to vanish from the mind of a convinced determinist." Sidgwick's *Methods of Ethics*, 6th ed., p. 71.

[2] Here again let me quote Prof. Sidgwick: "Against the formidable array of cumulative evidence offered for Determinism there is to be set the immediate affirmation of consciousness in the moment of deliberate action." *Op. cit.* p. 65.

[3] In dealing with the problem of freedom, Bergson lays stress on the difference between the actual experience of willing and the experience represented in the artificially developed time-form. In *Time and Free Will* he employs this argument against Determinism. Cp. also the valuable remarks of Prof. Ward in his *Realm of Ends*, p. 305 ff.

The man himself in willing explains his action by pointing forward to the ends he is striving to realise ; the retrospective observer reverses the process, and inquires what motives prompted the act, how the motives were influenced by character, and how character was influenced by something else. This method gives the infinite regress ; and that is sufficient to show that the causal series is only a serviceable postulate by which we interpret experience, but not the full truth. In the end we must presuppose a free or uncaused cause which is the ground of its own action. The human will is such a free cause, and its movement is not to be reconstructed and explained by the aid of factors beyond itself.

(4) Self-determinism which refuses to recognise open possibilities, and admits no contingency in human experience, rests on a defective idea of what spiritual development really means. For development on this view means explication, and the constant endeavour is to exhibit a definite and determinate connexion between the stages of the process. If the exigencies of causal explanation are pleaded in defence of this, we reply that spiritual self-development transcends the law of causal succession in time. Say what you will, there is something repellent in the rigid and inflexible development of experience and character, and there is much to welcome in the energetic protest of the Pragmatist against a ' block universe.' The epigenetic conception of development—that conception which recognises new beginnings within the developmental process —is far more in harmony with the facts of natural and spiritual evolution. Let it be frankly granted that these new beginnings, in the way that they come about, are not perfectly intelligible to us: certainly they cannot be explained in terms of what has gone before. And this, no doubt, exposes us to the charge of positing a non-rational element in experience. But there is more in the universe than reason, and no one can fully rationalise experience. We postulate rational connexion in experience, and up to a point we find it; yet unrationalised elements

always remain. We ourselves are more than intelligences: we are active agents, and the activity of will cannot be fully stated in terms of reason. If the consciousness of freedom and the facts of experience call for a world in which are open possibilities, and where the self can make new beginnings, we shall not reject the demand because it is said to be irrational. And if it be objected that we are sacrificing the principle of causal connexion, we reply that causal connexion is right enough in its own place, but there is a causality of freedom.

Let us now, at the risk of appearing dogmatic, give a brief statement of the nature of human freedom as we conceive it. Freedom cannot mean the liberty of indifference, for a will that is indifferent to values, and can as readily will the good as the bad, would not be a moral will. As has been said, the free will is not blind, and it cannot be divorced from a judgment of value on different possible courses of action.[1] Nor again can man figure as a personal and responsible agent unless he expresses some aspect of his character in his actions. Were a man's acts of volition destitute of any relation to his character, we could attribute as little ethical significance to them as we do to his acts of breathing. To sever the connexion of the will with character is to make man an unaccountable being, and to render moral valuation impossible. The key to the solution of the problem lies in the relation of the fundamental self to character. The self has to be distinguished from its content; it owns its character rather than is identical with it. The motives with which this basal self identifies itself are those which issue from the character that has been formed, and it is by realising one motive or another that the act of will becomes bad or good. But the character through which the self expresses itself is not something fixed and immutable: it is more or less plastic and growing. And so long as it is not a perfectly unified and consistent whole, it contains within it certain open possibilities, which may lead to different courses of action.

[1] Lotze, *Outlines of Practical Philosophy*, Eng. tr., p. 46.

The agent himself is not fully aware of all the possibilities in his character, and under stress of temptation sometimes falls when he expected to stand. It is these open possibilities which make the act of choice a real choice, and explain the agent's conviction that he could have done otherwise. But in opposition to certain extreme forms of Libertarianism two points must be emphasised. (1) The freedom of open choice belongs to a stage of spiritual evolution. It does not exist in beings who have not attained to self-consciousness and the power of deliberation. Nor is it conceivable it should exist in a perfect personality like God, who is incapable of sin. (2) Again, the openness of choice in self-conscious persons varies, and freedom in this sense is a matter of degree. This freedom to choose between different courses is diminished by the weakening of self-consciousness under the influence of passion or through the dominance of mechanised habit. From the side of the object, again, the scope of choice may be restricted by the situation, and the individual will sometimes have to encounter "forced options." [1] Moreover, the ethical development of character, either in the direction of goodness or badness, tends to restrict open possibilities. The less plastic character becomes, the greater internal unity and coherency it achieves, the fewer are the variations which it admits, and the smaller the likelihood of new beginnings. The ideal is perfect self-determinism under the dominance of the good will. But freedom of this higher kind is for man a task to be worked out by moral effort. It is a goal to which he can only slowly approximate; and he has to move towards it through that stage of spiritual evolution where possibilities are more or less open, and there is the risk of failure and defeat.

We may now gather up the results of this discussion, and exhibit their bearing on the question of man's

[1] On these and other points very suggestive remarks will be found in the acute and able volume of K. Joël, *Der Freie Wille*. München, 1908. Joël rightly objects to the Kantian doctrine of freedom, that it does not admit of degrees.

responsibility for the existence of moral evil. The moderate and qualified form of indeterminism here advocated will be found, I think, to lighten the burden of divine responsibility for moral evil, though it does not completely solve the mystery of its presence in the world.

The fact that man, who is a self-conscious will, is able to choose good or evil, and, in choosing to do evil, gives sin a place in the world, enables us to say that God is not directly concerned in its production. Even to say that God conditionally wills the existence of moral evil is an overstatement of the case. What is true is, that he brought about a development which carried within it moral evil as a possibility, and the activity of the human will has converted this possibility into an actuality. Any theory of sin which fails to take into account the contributory activity of man's will ignores an essential factor in the situation. Nevertheless one or two considerations will make it plain that only a partial solution of the problem is reached in this way. In the first place, there is a difficulty in conceiving how an act of will could absolutely originate sin at a point in the temporal development. For the act of will refers us back to a pre-existing desire and a susceptibility to temptation, which already argue a moral defect. Perhaps we are here face to face with the mystery of all beginnings: in any case to posit an original act of sin in the transcendent sphere explains nothing, and is itself in great need of explanation. Moreover, another fact which was noted earlier in the chapter has now to be kept in mind: the connexion of natural and moral evil. Sin supervenes on an order in which natural evil already exists; and it is natural evil, in the form of unregulated desires, lusts, and passions, which is the soil from which moral evil springs. We are face to face with the difficulty that the germs of moral evil appear to exist in the sensuous nature of man. On the other hand, man, by the free exercise of his will, has actualised these potencies and made sin a power in the world. Natural evil therefore makes possible the existence of moral evil, but only the

free activity of man develops sin in the full sense of the word. This link between the forms of evil reminds us that the two theories of moral evil must supplement one another. Neither the view that sin is implicated in the nature of a finite and limited being like man, nor the view that it proceeds solely from the will and its power of free choice, is by itself sufficient. Both contain elements of truth; and when we combine them we reach further towards a solution of the problem than if we set out from either by itself. The natural evils which flow from man's finite nature, if they do not directly create sin at least furnish the conditions which make it possible; while the specific character of sin itself is due to the agency of man's will.

In the end, no doubt, God must have a certain indirect responsibility for moral evil, and of course a more direct responsibility for natural evil. And though we refuse to endorse the idea that sin is a good in disguise, we can discover grounds for believing that its presence in the universe is not inconsistent with an overruling purpose of good. Our whole outlook implies and is conditioned by the presence of evil in the world, and our moral experience would be something altogether different if there were no sin or temptation against which to contend. The consciousness of this truth seems to have inspired Plato's remark, that evil could not pass away from this earthly experience, for there must always be something opposite to the Good.[1] To say, indeed, that natural and moral evil are necessary instruments of good, would be to go too far. Yet the former, by thwarting man's purposes and intensifying his needs, is a stimulus which calls forth his energies, while the latter, by assailing his spiritual life, spurs him to the development of his spiritual powers. The 'spirit that denies' has his office, as Goethe says:—

> "Des Menschen Thätigkeit kann allzu leicht erschlaffen,
> Er liebt sich bald die unbedingte Ruh;
> Drum geb' ich gern ihm den Gesellen zu,
> Der reizt und wirkt und muss als Teufel schaffen."

[1] *Theaet*, 176 A.

If spiritual life is to be a process of development, therefore a movement which advances from a lesser to a greater good, the possibility of moral evil is involved. For spiritual development, as we have steadily maintained, is not an automatic process: it is a movement which is rooted in freedom, and advances to its goal through the free preference on the part of individuals of the better to the worse. A development where progress is not the law but the vocation of free spirits would not be intelligible, if the evil were not opposed to the good, and man had not to face the temptation and the risk of being untrue to himself. There is merit in overcoming when we have to encounter real obstacles and to face real perils. A true progress of this kind, though beset by hazards and including within it temporary failures and defeats, may well have seemed something greater and more valuable in the eyes of God than an evolution governed throughout by a cast-iron law. If so, then the possibility of sin would be accepted as the condition of a higher kind of good. For ourselves we cannot but think that to choose freely, to take risks, and to win by personal struggle against temptation, is the way to a higher and more personal good than could be reached were human wills the mere instruments of a universal law of evolution.

Sin exists to be overcome, and it is the vocation of the spiritual man to overcome it. The train of thought we have been following appears to lead to the postulate that evil will be overcome. If sin is destined to remain in eternal antagonism to the good, then it is hard to reconcile its existence with the ethical character of God. The stress of the problem, however, is sensibly relieved, when we suppose the emergence of moral evil belongs to a stage in the evolution of spirit where it furnishes a spiritual trial and test for the developing self-consciousness. But sin is no rival principle ruling in its own right: it exists as an obstacle to progress, although even at its strongest it cannot permanently resist the power of goodness. "The moment the true character of any form of evil is apparent

that moment the struggle to overcome it begins."[1] And the lesson of history appears to be that, when evil becomes concentrated and intense, it quickens by reaction the superior forces of the good, which in the long run prevail. The conflict of the good against the evil is 'a warfare long drawn out,' but on the whole it is a hopeful warfare. So it is that the historic life gives us the opportunity freely to fulfil our 'high calling' through strenuous endeavour. Despite the presence of sin with all its marring effects, there is room for an optimistic view of the world. Let us try to justify this statement.

E.—Optimism and Pessimism.

"We bid you hope," said Goethe. Our right to take a hopeful view of life, to affirm that "things work together for good," is a far-reaching question which raises profound issues. To generalise in these matters is tempting, but to secure a really adequate basis for generalisation is difficult. To value life in general is a baffling business, and the inclination to allow our personal experience to colour our whole outlook is well nigh irresistible. Moreover, the facts are not simple, and against facts which tell in one way we can set facts which tell in another way. There are things in the world which make the soul hopeful, and there are things which make it exceeding sorrowful; and it depends greatly on which side of experience he likes to linger, what a man's verdict on life will be. Hence the emphasis due to individual experience has a decided influence on the judgment of value. Probably most people who strive honestly to be dispassionate, will agree that the truth lies neither in pure optimism nor in pure pessimism. Our world is a commingling of light and shadow; yet even where the shadows lie deepest there are tokens which bid us hope.

Pessimism, like many other things, is both old and

[1] Ward, *The Realm of Ends*, p. 376. The whole chapter deserves careful reading.

new. Before our era the pessimistic spirit deeply coloured the Buddhist vision of life; and the Hebrew Preacher, a sad and disillusioned man, looked forth on a world full of weariness, a world where all was vanity and a striving after wind. In the poetry both of the classical and the modern world the note of melancholy constantly recurs, suggesting that beneath the bright surface of life there moves an undercurrent of sadness.

> "The world, which seems
> To lie before us like a land of dreams,
> So various, so beautiful, so new,
> Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
> Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain."

From poetry, however, we look rather for a spiritual impression of experience, reflected in the medium of the poet's mood, than for a reasoned criticism of life. Now, if Pessimism is to justify itself as a theory of life, it must rest, not on a temperamental and impressionist picture of experience, but on a philosophic basis. To supply this basis was the aim of Schopenhauer and his follower Von Hartmann. We are invited to believe that the pessimism of these writers represents an objective and fairly balanced view of life and human experience, and is not the mere reflexion of personal feelings. It is difficult to believe this. The natural gloom of Leopardi and the morose and embittered disposition of Schopenhauer had undoubtedly an influence on their theory of life. The youth who sees the world in a rosy light, happy in the consciousness of an answered affection, is personal in his optimism no doubt. But so was Schopenhauer when he fiercely assailed optimism as "a bitter mockery of the unspeakable suffering of mankind." Men are swayed by their moods, and they colour with them the wider world around them. Under the influence of sorrow, suffering, and disappointment, the optimist becomes for the time being a pessimist, and finds life unprofitable. So Luther, the protagonist of faith, in the end confessed: "I am utterly weary of life. I pray the Lord will come forthwith and carry me hence." And

Goethe, the apostle of hope, reports: "I can affirm that during the whole of my seventy-five years, I have not had four weeks' genuine well-being."[1] If the judgments we pass on our own experience thus reflect our mood, the same is also true when we pass judgment on the larger experience of men. A man struggling with poverty and ill-health is prone to think poorly of life in general.

The pessimist is, of course, well aware that, if he is to argue his case plausibly, he must do so on wider grounds than those of personal feeling. But the endeavour to justify Pessimism by drawing up a calculus of pleasures and pains, and by showing that on the balance the pains are far in excess of the pleasures, is not successful. The difficulties in the way of framing such a calculus are insuperable. How, to begin with, is it possible to fix a standard or unit of pleasure-value? There is no common measure in pleasures by which to evaluate them; and even though you had a standard, how could you apply it to pleasures which are notoriously different in quality? The intrinsic difficulties of a hedonistic calculus are attested by the fact that no serious attempt has ever been made to construct one. To say that the pains of life are quantitatively in excess of the pleasures, or *vice versâ*, must therefore be reckoned an *ex cathedrâ* assertion for which no definite proof can be given. Nor will it help matters to venture on the generalisation that pain is the positive element, and that pleasure merely denotes the absence of pain. This theory is psychologically false. Many pleasures are certainly positive, and it would be misplaced ingenuity to try to prove the contrary.

Schopenhauer saw it was important to connect his pessimistic *Weltanschauung* with a metaphysical and psychological theory. One great source of hope for mankind has been its religious faith. This faith has been the fresh spring of uplifting thoughts and of comfort in dark hours. For Schopenhauer religious faith was a pernicious

[1] *Vid.* James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, p. 135, where the passages are quoted.

illusion, and he would have none of it. In his theory there is no personal God: an irrational and unconscious Will is the ground and substance of the world. Hence there can be no talk of Wisdom and a shaping Purpose at the heart of things, nor any room to expect that the historic process will reveal a growing good. Schopenhauer completes his metaphysics by a psychology of the will which directly leads to pessimism. Thought and idea are only secondary products of will in man; and it is the very nature of will to be an empty and aimless striving. One desire arises in us after another, and we are doomed to the futile task of trying to satisfy what can never be satisfied. So man is condemned to the pain of unsatiated desire, and the experience in which he dreamed to find fulness of joy proves utterly hollow and disappointing.

Schopenhauer's psychology is just as onesided as his metaphysics, and it shows the devices to which the pessimist is led in order to maintain his position. "The will described by the philosopher of pessimism is not the will of a healthy human being, but of a moody and spoilt child."[1] Every human being has experience of weariness and suffering; but there are few who cannot set over against this times of quiet happiness, hours of satisfaction with tasks accomplished. Need does not perforce spell misery; and there may be a pleasure in satisfying wants although the satisfaction is not final and complete. It is not desire which makes men wretched, but desire for the wrong things; and people do not become soured and bitter because they have hoped and striven, but because they have done so in vain. Schopenhauer tries to frighten us with the spectre of endless desire, and to make it a justification for his sombre view of life. But we have only to ask ourselves whether human persons would enjoy a higher well-being were there nothing left to desire, to see the fallacy. There is nothing in the spectacle of human failure to find any perfect satisfaction on earth which conflicts with faith in a divine government of things. A

[1] Paulsen, *System of Ethics*, Eng. tr., p. 294.

human life destitute of aspiration and endeavour would not be great or good: it would be mean and brutish. The condition desiderated by the pessimist is that which suits a healthy animal rather than a living soul. The desires and aspirations of men, even though they never close in a full satisfaction, are, rightly regarded, a witness to the greatness of man; and they signify something higher and better than mere repletion. On the whole the case for pessimism must be judged to break down: the evils of life are balanced by goods, and there are possibilities of greater good as the reward of loyal endeavour.

The pure optimist steadily regards the other side of the picture and minimises the evils of life. That there are evils he cannot of course deny, but suffering, he thinks, is easily outweighed in the scale by happiness. This is the facile Optimism represented by the spirit of Pope's aphorism: "All partial evil universal good." The optimist of this type hopes much from progress, which he deems inevitable; he exalts the blessings of education, and he has a great deal to say about the widening diffusion of happiness which accompanies the spread of civilisation. With the development of culture, it is maintained, goes an increase of happiness, alike in the individual and the race. And we are reminded how the spread of scientific knowledge has liberated the human mind from a host of foolish fears and degrading superstitions. All this, it is said, justifies us in taking a very hopeful view of human life.

There are several considerations, however, which the optimist overlooks. For one thing it is not by any means clear, that the experienced feeling of happiness increases with civilisation. To us the life of the savage seems 'nasty, brutish, and short,' but the savage himself does not feel it to be so, and he is probably as happy in his own way as the civilised man is in his way. Neither would willingly change places with the other. Again, while advancing culture enables man to satisfy wants which, at an earlier

and ruder stage, he could not do, it does not follow that this means a net increase in human happiness. Progress in civilisation creates new desires calling for satisfaction, and the man of the present day is made miserable by the absence of some comfort or convenience which his ancestors were perfectly content to do without. And many will doubt whether, in this modern age of mechanical invention and technical ingenuity, life has not grown rapid and superficial rather than deeper and richer. The sufferings caused by oppression, so familiar in the ancient and mediæval world, have not been banished from modern society: they have assumed new forms. The unspeakably brutal treatment of unoffending lower races by so-called civilised peoples in quite recent times is a testimony to the wickedness from which men do not shrink in their lust for gold. When riot and anarchy break loose in a civilised community, we catch a glimpse of the passions which slumber beneath the fair surface of society. Reflexions like these should warn us against an exuberant optimism.

From a purely empirical standpoint it is hard to reach a decisive conclusion on this subject. Probably most people who consider the matter with an open mind will incline to a qualified optimism. Human life is far from what it ought to be, but it seems to be growing better; and though evil does not vanish, it stands out in sharper contrast to the good. Whatever be the balance of pleasure and pain, mankind on the whole appears to move towards a higher well-being. So we may suppose our candid observer to argue. But the truth is, that on merely empirical grounds we cannot draw a perfectly sure conclusion. It will make all the difference to our outlook on life, to our hope for the future and our faith in progress, whether we regard the world from a religious point of view or not. The Christian redemptive view of the world, for instance, fully recognises the existence of evil, but none the less it is distinctly optimistic. But Christian Optimism does not arise out of an induction

from experience: it springs from faith in the character of God. This faith is indissolubly linked with hope. It is of the highest consequence whether we bring religious postulates to our view of life or not; whether we conceive the Ground of the world to be a personal God or a blind and irrational Will. Our attitude to life, too, will much depend on whether we take it as something ultimate and complete, or believe that mundane experience points beyond itself. So the argument between Optimism and Pessimism, when followed to its issues, passes into the larger problem of the final Destiny of Man.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PROGRESS AND DESTINY OF MAN.

A.—The Goal of Human History.

We have seen, in the last chapter, that the perplexities which gather round the presence of evil in the world are sensibly diminished when we regard evil as something to be overcome, and actually in process of being overcome. There is a progress, that is to say, in the life of mankind. This conception of progress, however, requires for its justification some theory of the destiny of man, some notion of the goal to which history is moving. It may be a fully developed theory is beyond our scope, but a discussion of the subject is needed to complete our argument, and the facts themselves seem to call for it. Life, whether you regard it from the individual or the collective standpoint, is incomplete and broken, and points beyond itself. When you try to spell out its meaning and value, you are driven to ask, not only whence it comes, but whither it tends. The real significance of any process of development cannot be discerned apart from its goal or completion, for development is far more than change.

Yet when we ask, what is the ultimate destiny to which the human race is moving, we find that materials on which to base a judgment are scanty indeed. Neither the past nor the present yields evidence in the light of which it might be possible to form a reasoned conclusion in regard to the future. So far as men have expressed ideas on the subject, these reveal the movements of human faith and hope rather than the deductions of logical thought.

In truth this problem, like all problems which concern the future, can receive no answer which does not involve a demand on faith.

While the question is an insistent one for the mature self-consciousness, it was not a question which was raised early, and it is hardly even foreshadowed in primitive culture. To ask for the goal of human development is to assume some idea of the solidarity of the race, and this is a late idea. It played no part in tribal culture, and even at the stage of national religion it still remained in the background. So highly civilised a people as the ancient Greeks did not occupy themselves with the subject; and a representative thinker like Aristotle is content to suggest that progress may move in cycles, and the blessings of culture may more than once be lost and found again. The Hebrew mind, again, was too much dominated by the thought of the nation to consider readily the question of the destiny of mankind; while the Hindu, with a slender sense for historic values, did not advance beyond the conception of an absorption of all individuals in the universal Spirit. The truth is, that only with the advent of Christianity was the problem of the future of the race distinctly put and definitely answered. The universalism of the Christian faith, which transcended the distinctions of Jew and Gentile, bond and free, gave the eye that wider range of vision which included the fortunes of the whole race. No doubt this conception, as it developed in the minds of Christians, was at first entangled with beliefs of a crude and temporary character. The apocalyptic ideas which were current in Jewish thought were reflected in the speech and literature of the early Christians, and men fancied that the Second Advent and the end of the age were at hand. They looked for a sudden and catastrophic rather than a gradual and spiritual coming of the Kingdom of Heaven. These anxious expectations and high-strung hopes were doomed to disappointment, and it was under the shadow of disillusionment that the vision of the Church was slowly purified. Clear cut from alien

elements the outlines of the heavenly kingdom were gradually revealed to human eyes—a kingdom not descending swiftly from above, but inwardly and increasingly developing in the hearts and lives of men. The symbol was not the sign in the sky, but the leaven silently operating till the whole was leavened. The expansion of Christianity in ancient society gave force and assurance to the spiritual ideal of a divine kingdom of redeemed humanity ruled by the law of love. For this kingdom was giving visible witness of its presence and power; it was coming now, and would come more and more. Here was an ideal which inspired the thoughts, and here was a task which claimed the labour of the hands. So the Christian conception of the Kingdom of God, which is the destiny of man, is in one sense future, for it is as yet unfulfilled, and denotes the ideal goal of humanity; but, in another sense, it is already present, since it works as a purifying and uplifting power in the souls of men and in the heart of society.[1]

The Christian solution of the problem of the destiny of mankind is essentially a religious solution, and is independent of speculative ideas or scientific theories. It rests on that faith in the spiritual character of God and man and their inner affinity, which became the assured possession of the Christian consciousness through the life and teaching of Christ. The goal is spiritual and transcendent, for man is a spirit and derives his being from the transcendent God who is the Father of Spirits. We cannot fairly object that this view of human destiny is not a reasoned conclusion but a judgment of faith. It could not be otherwise; for the postulates of religion issue from spiritual experience and vision, not from argument. But though we cannot reason to this result, it might still be asked if there are no considerations which tend to support it. An appeal is often made to the authoritative character of Christian revelation. Those who are not disposed to recognise an appeal of this kind, the modern theologian

[1] Cp. Lipsius, *Dogmatik*, p. 862.

might ask to consider, how far Christian postulates are verified by their working in experience. The ideal Kingdom of God is not a dream but a working-value. Moreover, it is the living consciousness of the worth of the spiritual life itself which inspires the claim of faith that the spiritual values shall not be lost. For the religious consciousness it is a contradiction that the good in the individual and humanity should be rudely annihilated by alien forces, and never come to its full fruition. Hence a fully developed, spiritual faith carries with it the conviction, that the movement of human progress cannot finally end in failure and defeat. However long and devious the way, however often the journey be fraught with disappointment and pain, mankind will come to its divinely appointed goal.

(1) Those who approach the problem apart from the values of religious experience will still be unsatisfied. There is something visionary, they think, in the conception, and they want to deal with the question in the sober light of scientific knowledge. It may be well for us, therefore, to ask whether science can make any contribution to the discussion of the problem. One cannot doubt the answer must be, that science, which eschews speculation, is powerless to give us any sure word on man's origin or his destiny. From the standpoint of naturalism, man appears to be the outcome of a long evolution, a process conditioned by the environment and the struggle for existence. In its actual origin life is a mystery; but, so far as scientists can trace its development, it is everywhere dependent on natural conditions and cosmic forces. How long the process of evolution will continue, whether the developmental movement is not doomed ere long to be superseded by one of retrogression, these are things, the scientific man tells us, which will be finally determined by the action of those natural laws which make life possible. To predict very definitely how long organised beings will continue to exist is, of course, not practicable, but the scientist is tolerably sure that the principle of the dissipation of

energy will at last produce a state of things on the earth, and throughout the solar system, in which universal death reigns.[1] On this view the ultimate arbiters of human destiny are cosmic forces and conditions: this being so, no doubt in the long run these will cause the arrest of man's development, and then bring about a process of decline ending in extinction. "The theory of evolution encourages no millenial expectations. If, for millions of years, our globe has taken the upward road, yet, some time, the summit will be reached and the downward route will be commenced. The most daring imagination will hardly venture on the suggestion that the power and intelligence of man can ever arrest the procession of the great year."[2] And a contemporary thinker expresses himself in the same strain. "That all the labours of the ages, all the devotion, all the inspiration, all the noonday brightness of human genius, are destined to extinction in the vast death of the solar system, and that the whole temple of man's achievement must inevitably be buried beneath the débris of a universe in ruins—all these things, if not quite beyond dispute, are yet so nearly certain, that no philosophy which rejects them can hope to stand."[3] The message of naturalism, it would seem, is, that the final destiny of man is determined by the action of blind and ruthless forces. The working of these elemental forces apparently admits of no hope that there will be an ultimate conservation of values: mechanical laws are indifferent to ethical considerations. The conclusion is discouraging and pessimistic; but we must not forget that the man of science, when he deals in prediction, cannot give proof of his prophecies. Although he may feel very sure the forces of nature will continue to work in the future as they have done in the past, still the assertion

[1] Recent investigations into the nature of matter and of the elements have made men of science less inclined to speak dogmatically on the duration of the world and life.

[2] Huxley's *Collected Essays*, vol. ix. p. 85.

[3] The Hon. Bertrand Russell in his essay on *The Free Man's Worship*.

that they will do so is none the less an act of faith on his part. And there is always the possibility that the interpretation of the past, on the basis of which he forecasts the future, may be incomplete and therefore defective. The failure of prediction, through failure to take into account all the relevant factors of the problem, is a familiar enough fact in the history of science. In the present instance naturalism certainly ignores important considerations. It wrongly assumes the mechanical conception of nature is perfectly true; in reality it is an abstract and hypothetical way of regarding things, useful, no doubt, for certain purposes. And it neglects to allow for the truth that, if man's spiritual life is not a product of nature, its destiny may not be determined by material conditions. What the natural order cannot create, it may not be able to destroy. Natural science, if it keeps to its right rôle, can only profess ignorance on the subject of man's destiny: when it goes beyond this and draws pessimistic inferences, the verdict may be discounted on the ground of its defective understanding of the principles involved.

(2) Let us now consider how far philosophical thinking can yield a more satisfying answer to our question. So far as it deals with the problem, it does so through a speculative or idealistic theory of development. In an earlier chapter we tried to describe the general nature of spiritual development, and it is not needful to cover the same ground again. Certain speculative conceptions of human development we saw reason to reject. Our conclusion was, that progress is not a rigorous law; it is not a principle immanent in the historic life which infallibly brings about a continuous development. Instead of this we found that human progress was rooted in the endeavour of personal spirits: it was a vocation to adopt, a task to fulfil, not an inflexible law which all must obey. Consequently it was intelligible that progress was not a continuous movement. Advance was often hampered, and sometimes arrested; and there were even periods when the tokens pointed to retrogression rather than to progress.

When we discard the idea of an immanent necessity controlling the movement of history through all its stages, we sacrifice the right to assert a rigorous predestination of events. But by abandoning this conception we preclude ourselves, it may be said, from assigning any distinct goal to the historic process. Instead of a determinate movement we have a process perfectly plastic and full of indefinite possibilities. Have we not committed ourselves to some such theory as M. Bergson has sketched in his *Creative Evolution*, a theory according to which the universe is in a constant process of creation, and the 'gates of the future' are never closed but stand wide open? If so, then it will be said we have sought to take from man a sure faith in ultimate issues, and to replace it by a spirit of mere adventure or hazard. None can foretell how the voyage will end when the possibilities are so various:—

> "It may be that the gulfs will wash us down,
> It may be we shall reach the Happy Isles."

You cannot prophesy, we shall be told, when the risks are so great and the prospects so vague. In a world where nothing is fixed, there is no room to trust and hope that mankind will attain to some definite goal. And if there is no assurance for the future, to speak of a goal of history is a phrase without meaning.

Now we hold that we cannot eliminate all open possibilities and exclude all risks, from the life of the individual or the race. And rightly so, for there is something repellent in a universe which admits of no contingency nor of free initiative in human agents. But to say this is not by any means to say, that the historic process is something formless and indefinite which may end anywhere and anyhow. We do not commit ourselves to the belief that the progress, so far visible in human history, is an accident, and just as likely to cease as to continue. The sphere of possibilities has limits, and, as we have argued, human freedom operates within conditions,

these conditions exercising a controlling influence on the general line of development. In the first place, the metaphysical basis on which development takes place has to be kept in mind. That basis is not an indefinite plurality of isolated individuals, but a true unity. We do not set out from a mere multiplicity of independent centres of experience, but from a plurality of individuals interacting within a continuous medium and systematically interrelated, the whole system of finite existences ultimately depending on the activity of a Supreme Ground. Any line of development, therefore, must be conditioned by the dependent character of the individuals, and by their relation to one another and the whole within which they interact. In the so-called natural world, which forms by its order the basis of human development, the spontaneity of its elements is, if we may use the expression, submerged, and their action and reaction wear the appearance of mechanical uniformity. When self-conscious beings develop, their freedom can only be exercised in harmony with the working of the order on which they supervene. Of course the advent of the self-conscious will of man means that a higher factor has emerged in the history of the world: development has become a conscious task instead of an unconscious process. Yet, as Lotze used to insist, the alterations brought about by the human will on the course of nature are narrowly limited, and can easily be balanced in the general economy.[1] The possibilities implied in the exercise of freedom must fall within the comparatively narrow bounds prescribed by human nature and character as they exist within a given environment.

Again, human development, though it is rooted in personal endeavour, is none the less a teleological movement; but it is the teleology of purpose freely fulfilled,

[1] *Vid.* e.g. *Religionsphilosophie*, p. 61. Professor James, in a well-known passage (*Will to Believe*, pp. 180–182), argues that an all-wise Providence, like an absolutely efficient chess-player, can bring about the end determined whatever moves the human player may make.

not of unconscious growth. There would be no progress unless human souls responded to the appeal of ideals, and human wills were consciously directed to ends. But an end or ideal which harmonises the nature of man is no arbitrary creation: it issues from the God-given nature of man, and he cannot he untrue to that end if he is to be true to himself. An individual may consciously turn away from the ideal, but he is powerless to win inner satisfaction from the life of sin. If there be progress, therefore, it must be in the direction in which men find an increasing self-fulfilment and a fuller harmony of their powers. Hence man cannot advance to his true self-fulfilment by any way save the one way. And that way is the way of the divine ideal. In spiritual development the ideal does not work in the form of an impersonal principle: it moves men as 'object of desire,' and it prevails in human life when individuals freely identify themselves with it and loyally strive to fulfil its demands. But "when there is no vision the people perish"; and where the ideal ceases to evoke the devotion of personal spirits, the springs of progress fail. The fact that men mark out social epochs as stagnant or decadent is itself a witness to the recognition of an ideal or norm. True, the recognition of an ideal is not the pledge of its attainment. Our assurance of its fulfilment lies in the conviction that human endeavour is sustained and supplemented by the wider and deeper working of God.

It will not be denied that there is progress, in the sense of an increasing development of spiritual capacities, visible in the broad movement of history. But if there is progress, to what does it tend? Where lies the goal by which you measure the distance traversed? This is not an easy question to answer, and some have fallen back on the notion that the ideal is just progress itself. Continuous development, it is argued, is the ultimate test of historic value. A little reflexion will show that the conception of progress as itself the end is too inconsistent to bear the brunt of criticism. Progress is a term which

needs explanation, and you cannot explain it unless you relate it to something beyond itself. The nature of advance or development becomes indistinguishable from change, if there is no definite goal to which it tends; the goal is the standard by which progress is discerned and judged. Progress ceases to have any definite meaning, if it does not signify a coming nearer to a determinate goal. Those who deny that progress has an end, or who say that progress is itself the end, can only fall back on arbitrary and relative ways of judging historic values. One historian sees progress where another finds plain evidence of deterioration. The valuations conflict, because the standards of judgment differ. So if no goal of development be recognised, those who evaluate historic phenomena must have recourse to a purely relative mode of judging. One historic phenomenon will be made a test for valuing another, while the latter in turn will perform a like office, and in the result there will be no coherency because there is no stable principle of appreciation. One age will have one standard and another a different standard, while consistency there will be none.[1] In this way we are plunged into what Eucken has suggestively called the 'soulless relativity' of pure historicism, and are condemned to an ever changing fashion in valuation. If we are to extricate ourselves from this bewildering entanglement, we must try to form some definite conception of the ideal to which human development points.

Shall we then think of human progress coming to a goal in some condition of static perfection? The difficulties which beset this idea have been suggested in an earlier chapter. For men constituted as they are, a life of realised perfection, where all endeavour ceased, would not be desirable. In our present environment such a life

[1] The following passage supplies an illustration. "A generation ago it was the reigning opinion that there is nothing good in politics but liberty, and that accordingly in history all those periods are to be passed over and, as it were, cancelled, in which liberty is not to be found." Seeley, *Expansion of England*, 1885, p. 237.

would not be a life of spiritual fulness for us, but one of sheer weariness. In this realisation of value the sense of value would have vanished. But there is a further difficulty connected with this idea of a mundane goal to human progress. It would be a consummation reserved for the favoured few, for those 'heirs of all the ages' who arrived last in time. That vast multitude who trod the earth on an earlier day would be doomed to pass away, "not having received the promises." There is an ethical contradiction in the thought that unnumbered generations have come and gone, destined to be only the stepping stones to a good in which they are denied a share. Surely individuals and stages of society have a spiritual value which entitles them to rank for something better than a means to a good beyond themselves! A land of promise for the last, while the many who prepared the way perished in the wilderness—this is not justice!

We shall be told, however, that we are making the fateful error of introducing into history a false dualism of means and end.[1] The stages of the historic life, it is objected, cannot be separated and contrasted in this way. It would be as wrong, for instance, to say that youth only exists as a means to manhood, as it would be to declare that manhood only exists as a means to old age. And generally regarded, life has its end in itself; hence what we call stages in the general movement of civilised life ought not to be artificially construed into a means to something beyond, for they have a meaning and value of their own.

In replying to this criticism I think we must deny that human society, at any of its stages, has that intrinsic perfection which would entitle us to say that the end of life is being realised in it. In every epoch of civilisation the note of dissatisfaction is heard, and human wills are

[1] A point made by Höffding. *Vid. Religionsphilosophie*, pp. 50–51. Paulsen argues in the same sense. Perhaps I may say here that, in this section, I have been helped by the relevant parts of Siebeck's *Religionsphilosophie*, and also by his brochure, *Zur Religionsphilosophie*.

always striving after some better order of things. To assert that the end of life is realised in any existing form of society, is to forget that every social system is hampered and marred by the presence within it of evil and sin. Were evil and sin only good under another name, the case might be different. But these opposing forces imperatively demand to be overcome; and in the face of this urgent demand it is a shallow optimism to proclaim the inherent perfection of any stage of mundane development. The sway of sin over society and the individual, when dispassionately regarded, is sufficient to preclude us from thinking the end of life is being achieved anywhere on earth. We seem then to be confronted with a dilemma: the destiny of humanity is not being fulfilled in the stages of its history, and yet a goal of progress cannot consistently be conceived under earthly and temporal conditions. We appear, therefore, to be driven to the conclusion that the goal must be supramundane: it must transcend the earthly order, and involve a transformation of the present form of human life.

Society is a spiritual structure whose materials are personal lives; and if a perfected society is to become real, personal spirits will have to be transformed into something higher and better than they are now. The key to this problem must therefore be found in an intrinsic relation of souls to a higher spiritual order. In this connexion we have to remember that persons are centres of spiritual value, and are not merely a means to the social good. It would be true to say that the end of society is the personal good of individuals, for the ethical values are only living and real in the persons who constitute society. In other words, though the good of the individual can only be realised through the system of social relations, society itself may be rightly conceived as the medium for the development of personal values. The inference we draw from the significance and value of personality is, that man cannot be a purely earthly being: his destiny lies in the supramundane sphere. And if the goal of history is an ideal

society, this transcendent social order postulates some form of personal immortality. Without this postulate the transition from a mundane to a supramundane order could not be ensured.

B.—The Idea of Immortality.

Plato has made the remark that the nature of the soul and its destiny had been the occasion of much scepticism.[1] And the remark would be as true to-day as it was in the age of Plato. In a matter where clear proof is notably absent, where considerations which point in one direction can be matched by considerations which point in another direction, it is no surprise to find much perplexity and uncertainty. Nor does it seem likely that the doctrine of immortality will ever pass from the sphere of faith to become one of the assured and universally accepted truths of reason. No doubt the tendency to dogmatic denial is waning: as the fruit of recent discussion the opinion has steadily been growing, that science is quite unable to disprove the possibility of immortality. On the other hand, even among those who accept the idea, the conviction is becoming more marked, that men cannot form any clear and consistent representation of the nature of the life after death. The reaction against anthropomorphism has made the educated mind very critical of the traditional pictures of the world to come.

Looking at the subject historically there is no room for us to doubt that the notion of immortality fills a large place in the structure of man's religious beliefs. The idea of survival after death has grown in significance with the growth of religions, and it ranges from a crude spiritism to a refined spiritualism. We cannot say, however, that belief in immortality is universal in religion,—there have been religions without it—but it has been persistent and widespread. The religious and ethical value of the belief has varied greatly. Some races regard the fact of death

[1] *Phædo*, 70 A.

lightly and are deeply engrossed with the world around them, while other races are much occupied with the thought of a life to come. Early culture hardly grasped the notion of a 'law of mortality,' and among the lowest peoples the belief is common that death is due to sorcery or to evil spirits: to admit the possibility of natural death marks an advance in thinking. The idea that the spirits of the dead are still living and active prevails far and wide among savage races, though they are regarded with fear rather than affection.[1] The persistent belief in the continued existence of the dead in the form of ghosts is significant, for it points to a deep-rooted disinclination to suppose that death ends all. Yet the primitive belief had no ethical meaning, and a man's ghost had no relation to his earthly mode of life. Even at a much more advanced stage of culture, belief in the survival of the soul after death may exercise little influence on religion and conduct. It was so, for example, with the ancient Greeks. In Hades the souls of the dead had a shadowy and attenuated kind of existence, and Greek faith in the individuality of the soul after death was faint. But a more practical interest in the destiny of the soul was afterwards inculcated by Orphism and the Mysteries. And what is true of the Greeks is also true of the Hebrews. Only in the latest stage of Hebrew religion did the notion of resurrection and a life hereafter become prominent. To the earlier Hebrews, Sheol, the abode of the dead, was a dim and shadowy realm lying remote from this world and its interests, a ghostly region over which even Jahveh's rule did not extend. The place filled by the doctrine of a future existence in the religion of ancient Egypt was far larger, and the Egyptian thought long and often on the fate of the soul in the land beyond the grave. The ethical aspect of the belief in immortality was here emphasised: in the world to come

[1] In a low type of culture, like that of the Australian aborigines, there is a firm belief in the existence of the soul after death. Among the natives of Central Australia belief in the reincarnation of spirits is said to be universal. *Vid.* J. G. Frazer, *The Belief in Immortality*, 1913, p. 92.

the soul was rewarded or punished for the deeds done in the body. In the judgment-hall of Osiris, the god of the spirit-world, the soul makes its appeal to its judge, and shows cause why it should be admitted to the happy fields of Alu. "I have not acted with deceit or done evil to men. I have not oppressed the poor. I have not judged unjustly. I have not known ought of wicked things. I have not committed sin. . . . I am pure! I am pure! I am pure!"[1]

But it is in the Christian religion that the spiritual and ethical implications of the belief in immortality are most fully developed. The conception is set before us of an immortal life inwardly related to this life, developing out of it but ultimately transcending it. In the Fourth Gospel the idea of an eternal life already present in this life is prominent. St. Paul unfolds the doctrine of a spiritual or transfigured body: he thinks death is the condition of a spiritual transformation of the natural man, so that he becomes capable of a supramundane and glorified life. The dogma of a resurrection of the flesh, which has found its way into the ecclesiastical creeds, is plainly inconsistent with the Pauline teaching.

On the whole, then, it is evident that a belief in immortality in some form has played an important part in the history of religion, and especially in the higher religions. The movement of the religious mind which issues in the thought of a transcendent Good is naturally linked with a faith that the personal spirit has a destiny beyond the seen and temporal order of things. But of course this faith would be discredited, if it could be shown to involve assumptions incompatible with the nature of man, and of the world in which he is placed. In the circumstances of the case, science can hardly be expected to yield any positive evidence for immortality.[2] But it may be pertinently

[1] Sayce, *The Religions of Ancient Egypt and Babylonia*, 1902, pp. 175–176.

[2] In recent times a few competent investigators have come to the conclusion that Psychical Research supplies some evidence of personal survival

asked whether scientific knowledge furnishes any positive reasons against it. Certainly, if it could be shown that personal consciousness is bound up with the present bodily organism, the hope of a survival after death would be excluded. Those who argue for the complete dependence of mind on body point out how psychical process is always associated with neural process; and on the advent of death as a physiological fact all signs of psychical activity cease. Nevertheless it is utterly wrong to conclude, as some do, that the relation of mind to body is one of causal dependence. It is one thing to hold there is a functional relation between mental and cerebral process, 'function' being here used in the mathematical sense of correspondence: it is another and a totally different thing to declare thought is a function of the brain, in the sense that it is generated by cerebral activity. Keeping the word *function* to its proper use in this connexion, we might as truly say the brain is a function of the mind as the mind of the brain. "The inference is never from what the brain can do to what the mind can be and do, but always, first, the opposite."[1] Dependence of mind on brain, in the materialistic sense, is, to put it briefly, impossible. This being so, the claim of the soul or self to exist apart from the body cannot be ruled out of count as inconceivable.

It may, however, be objected that memory has its basis in neural traces, and so cannot survive the dissolution of the body. Certainly we are not entitled to say memory is purely an affair of the mind, for many mental habits appear to be rooted in the structure of the nervous system. And the failure of memory under pathological conditions, or when in old age degeneration of tissue reaches the association areas of the cortex, is positive evidence of some

after death. But I fancy the verdict of most critics will be *non liquet*. The so-called phenomena of 'cross-references' do not prove more than telepathy. On this point the reader who is interested may consult with advantage Dr. McDougall's instructive chapter on "The Bearing of the Results of 'Psychical Research' on the Psycho-physical Problem," in his *Body and Mind*, 1911.

[1] W. Mitchell, *Structure and Growth of the Mind*, 1907, p. 24.

dependence of memory on cerebral traces or processes. The problem turns on the character and degree of this dependence. Now neural traces are not the sole, nor even the most important, condition of remembering; for if so memory would depend directly on repetition. But this is plainly not the case.[1] The truth is that memory depends far more on the presence of meaning in the things remembered; and meaning must be referred for its maintenance in the mind to *psychical*, not to cerebral, dispositions. It is therefore possible that the soul, which includes within it the psychical dispositions formed during this life, may carry with it the means of preserving a continuity between the present order and a higher order of existence. If a world of meanings can be maintained by the soul, despite the physiological changes of the body in a lifetime, it is conceivable it might be maintained through a more radical transformation. At all events a group of memories might remain, sufficient to give the sense of personal continuity.

So far as science is concerned, then, the question is an open one; it now remains to ask whether philosophy can shed some further light upon it. Philosophical thinkers have sought to commend the idea of immortality by metaphysical arguments and by ethical considerations.

(1) Of the metaphysical arguments much the same may be said that was said of the traditional proofs for the existence of God. They are not proofs in any strict sense, and they proceed on assumptions which can easily be called in question. Historically they go back as far as Plato. In the *Phædrus*, Plato urges that the soul, being self-moved, so having the principle of movement within itself, is unbegotten and therefore indestructible.[2] In the *Phædo* it is contended that the soul is a constitutive and directive principle, not a mere harmony derived from the body and

[1] For instance it is vastly easier to remember a rational sentence after a single hearing than the same number of nonsense-words repeated several times. Cp. W. McDougall, *op. cit.* pp. 330–343.

[2] P. 245 C.

perishing with it.[1] And the general drift of the dialogue is to show that the soul, in its essential idea, partakes of life, and thus cannot perish. But Plato looks at the subject from various points of view, and seeks to illuminate and suggest rather than to prove in the proper meaning of the word. Attempts of a more formal kind to demonstrate the immortality of the soul were made by the Scholastic and the Cartesian thinkers. The soul, it was argued, is a substance, simple, immaterial, and indestructible, and therefore to be thought as existing after death. Kant, in his "paralogisms of pure reason," criticises severely this application of the abstract category of substance to the self, and points out that the fact that the soul can be separated in idea from the body by no means proves that it is really separable. Whatever we may think of Kant's own conception of the self, his objections to the doctrine he is examining are valid. The idea of an immaterial substratum of psychical qualities is a product of abstraction, and in asserting the indestructibility of this substance you obviously assume immortality.[2] Modern metaphysicians who have argued for immortality have usually done so on the ground that there is something absolute and eternal in the very nature of the self. For instance, we are told that the being of the self is ultimate; or that it is a fundamental differentiation of the Absolute, and therefore cannot pass away. The strength of this contention is no greater than that of the doubtful metaphysics on which it is based. And if the argument were sound it would follow that every self must have eternally pre-existed, for a being which originated in time cannot be intrinsically eternal. Some, no doubt, are ready to endorse the theory of pre-existence; but there is no independent evidence for it, and at the best it remains improbable. Our general conclusion is, that the metaphysical arguments which have been brought forward yield no positive evidence of value in

[1] Pp. 94, 95.

[2] The conception of the self as an active spiritual substance, unifying its states, is, of course, something quite different.

favour of immortality. Where they do not assume what is to be proved, they rest on questionable metaphysical theories.[1]

(2) The strength of the case for immortality, as most people will admit, lies in the ethical argument. This line of thought was at least foreshadowed by Plato in a well-known passage in the *Republic*, Bk. x. He there contends that nothing can be destroyed except by its own inherent badness, and since vice cannot destroy the soul, there is no other power which can do so. Or, as we might put it in terms of modern thought, there is an intrinsic spiritual value in the soul which guarantees its immortal life. A similar idea of the value of the personal spirit is implied in the somewhat inconsistent argument which Kant put forward for its immortality. The soul, he says, is capable of the supreme good or perfected virtue. But the ethical demand that the ideal be realised in man, who is a sensuous as well as a rational being, postulates an infinite progress in time. Only thus can sensuous desire be transformed by reason. This infinite progress means immortality.[2] There is at least this core of truth in Kant's contention: we feel it to be inconsistent that the soul which is steadily striving towards the ideal, and growing into conformity with it, should be annihilated in the midst of its progress and the elements of value in it lost. A universe in which the Good makes such claims on personal spirits should in justice afford full scope for their fulfilment; and in the earthly lot this scope seems to be lacking. The thought of a further progress of the soul in a higher form of being gives greater harmony and coherency to the ethical outlook on life. But, granting this, can we say that immortality is an ethical postulate without which man's moral experience becomes unintelligible? If some are bold to say so, others frankly and firmly deny it. "If our religion and

[1] Lotze thinks the problem of immortality does not belong to metaphysics. This, of course, depends on our conception of metaphysics.

[2] Kant was here guilty of a twofold inconsistency. (1) Mere duration is not the essence of immortality. (2) On his own showing, time is a form for the phenomenal world, and does not apply to the real world at all.

our morality will not work without it (the postulate of immortality)—so much the worse, I reply, for our morality and our religion."[1] The opinion thus trenchantly expressed is no doubt held by a number of thinkers. On the whole I do not think we can go so far as to say that immortality is a postulate without which morality becomes unmeaning. But it is a supposition which gives greater consistency and deeper significance to the facts of moral and religious experience. That ideal and upward striving element, which is interwoven with the texture of man's moral and spiritual life, is far more intelligible if the final destiny of the soul is not in this world but beyond it.

The late Professor William James remarks, in his Ingersoll Lecture on Immortality, that "belief in immortality is very much a matter of feeling." No one who has studied the subject will care to deny that the feelings play a large part in this matter. Warmth of feeling makes the belief a living one, and the lack of feeling induces scepticism or indifference. Now undoubtedly there is a large body of feeling, revealed in the experience of the race and expressing itself in desires and aspirations, which favours the idea of immortality. Insistent is the appeal of human affections, and they lend strength to the faith that tender ties, rudely severed by death, will somehow be renewed 'in a better world.' Few or none can be indifferent to this form of appeal, though it is true enough that the doom of mortals is to desire many things which are impossible or impracticable. One cannot therefore found a valid argument on these desires; but their persistence throughout the long history of the race encourages us to think that they are more than foolish and futile longings. If man is by nature incapable of transcending this earth-born form of existence, why this recurring hope of a destiny beyond the world? The movement of the soul towards a Good which this world can neither give nor take away; the increasing consciousness of the spirit that this 'bourne of time and place' affords no full scope for its development;

[1] Bradley, *Appearance and Reality*, 1st ed., p. 507.

all this is suggestive of a goal beyond the seen and temporal world. The religious man at least finds it very hard to believe that such desires should emerge within a divinely ordered universe, if all fulfilment is denied.[1]

None the less it is fair to tell us we ought to examine our desire for immortality, in order to make clear to ourselves what we really want, and whether we are consistent in wanting it. For when we try to represent to ourselves the kind of immortal life we desire, we become conscious of the difficulties that ensue. The desire for the mere continuance of present relationships hereafter may be inconsistent. The mother who craves immortality for her infant can hardly desire it should continue to all eternity an infant! And the youth cannot really wish that the aged parent should be condemned to an unending life of senility! Swift's cynical picture of the Struldbrugs may remind us that an immortality of senile impotence would be more terrible than annihilation. It becomes plain on reflexion that the value of an immortal life lies in its quality and fulness, in its superiority to the divisions and distractions of time, not in mere endless endurance. And such a life implies a transformation of the earthly life and its conditions. On the other hand, the change cannot be so great that all continuity between the mundane and supramundane existence is dissolved, for immortality would then lose its personal and ethical significance. A metempsychosis, such as Brahmanism teaches, is devoid of ethical value.

The essential point is the degree of transformation which is involved in the transition from a mundane to a supramundane form of being. If immortality is to be

[1] The spiritual significance of this human hope is indicated in the following lines from Browning's *La Saisiaz*:

"Whereas, life and laws apparent, reinstated,—all we know,
All we know not,—o'er the heaven again cloud closes, until, lo—
Hope the arrowy, just as constant, comes to pierce its gloom, compelled
By a power and by a purpose which, if no one else beheld,
I behold in life, so—hope!"

personal and ethical, this transformation cannot be so great that it breaks down all memory of the past and cuts the thread of individual continuity. A supra-mundane life which had no conscious connexion with man's earthly existence could not shed light on the spiritual problems of experience nor fulfil man's spiritual aspirations. Pantheistic and idealistic thinkers who insist on the limitations of personality, suggest that death marks the expansion of the self into the impersonal. The soul, we are told, is a function of the Absolute mediated by the body, and with the dissolution of the body the soul sinks back into the Absolute. Those who adopt this theory sometimes speak of the eternity of the mind or spirit—so, for instance, Spinoza; but it is the eternity of the impersonal element in man, and an immortality of this kind is devoid of religious value. For it neither completes nor fulfils the personal life.

How, it may be asked, can this material body be so transformed that it becomes the medium or instrument of a higher life, a life to some extent continuous with the old life? To set forth a convincing theory is beyond our power, but we can indicate possibilities on the basis of the monadistic view of the world and life. We set out from the fact that the unity of the soul cannot be explained through the bodily organism: it is not created by the interaction of the bodily elements. This psychical unity, present at all stages of development from pure sentiency to rational self-consciousness, is the teleological principle which makes development possible. Living elements do not evolve a unity, but because they already form a unity they develop. Now the human organism we suppose to be a graduated order of elements, and these elements are monads, because each possesses a degree of inner or psychical life; while the soul is the supreme or dominant monad which gives unity to the whole.[1] By its selective and assimilative activity it

[1] The conception of the 'dominant monad,' it will be remembered, is due to Leibniz.

builds up the body, in other words, unifies and develops in a specific teleological way the system of monads we call the body. Hence the germinal soul, by the active selection and disposition of subordinate elements, constitutes a psychical life which grows from sentiency to self-consciousness. So it is conceivable that the soul, or dominant monad, persisting after the disintegration of the present organism, might build up a new and higher order of body, while it maintained a certain continuity of memory and interest with the previous form of personal existence. There is no insuperable objection to the idea that what the soul has done, at one stage of existence, it might repeat at a higher stage. That it must do this is, of course, more than we can prove: still, in the manner suggested, we can see that a personal continuity of life, which is not destroyed by death, is at least possible. It is relevant to our argument to have shown that this possibility exists. But we cannot turn a possibility into positive evidence; and the strength of the case for immortality lies in ethical and spiritual considerations.

Those who defend the doctrine of immortality have to show that it is not inconsistent with reason or incompatible with the nature of things. But the idea itself remains the object of faith rather than of reason. And the final ground of our faith and hope must be the character of God himself, from whom all spiritual life proceeds. It is surely a legitimate trust, that the Father of Spirits will not destroy the aspiring soul that draws its being from himself, but will in the end bring it to its goal and true fulfilment. An ethical God must be the conserver, not the destroyer of values. This claim of faith to immortality rests mainly on the intrinsic character of the spiritual life: it has no direct bearing on beings who have never attained to a personal and spiritual life at all. That every creature formed in the semblance of man, however brutish or undeveloped, is destined to immortality, is more than we dare affirm. To do so would require a deeper knowledge of the divine

economy than we possess. We agree with Lotze, "that every created thing will continue, if and so long as its continuance belongs to the meaning of the world; that everything will pass away which had its authorised place only in a transitory phase of the world's course."[1]

In drawing my remarks on this subject to a close, I shall briefly recall the problems on which the doctrine of immortality casts light. (1) In the first place, the idea helps to harmonise man's ethical experience. He strives after an ideal which can never be fully realised in this life: the perfect Good is a transcendent Good. In keeping with the fact that man is capable of conceiving and seeking a transcendent Good, is the thought that his own destiny is in a transcendent world, a world where human experience is harmonised and human aspirations fulfilled. (2) In the second place, the conception of personal immortality enables us to form an adequate notion of the goal of social progress. This goal cannot be consistently represented in terms of the mundane order. (3) Finally, the idea of immortality gives us the only assurance which is satisfying, that the spiritual values will be conserved. A society whose members are all mortal gives no such guarantee; for the personal lives which make values living and real would be continually undergoing annihilation.[2] An eternal system cannot be composed of transitory elements. This truth deserves to be emphasised, for it is sometimes forgotten. Höffding, for instance, in his *Philosophy of Religion*, fails to explain how faith in the 'conservation of value' is legitimate, when there is no assurance that the personal spirits who make value real are conserved. Again, when another writer tells us, that what we really want in craving for immortality is that our 'main interests' should be conserved, we confess our inability to understand this if the persons interested are not conserved.[3] After all, ideas, values, and interests do

[1] *Metaphysics*, Eng. tr., ii. p. 182.

[2] Cp. on this point Siebeck, *Religionsphilosophie*, pp. 417-418.

[3] Bosanquet, *The Value and Destiny of the Individual*, p. 260 ff.

not exist for themselves: they are abstractions apart from the personal spirits who sustain them.

Faith in immortality is not a secondary or an accidental feature in the higher religious life of man. The developed religious consciousness reaches beyond the world and directs itself to a supramundane Good. It is therefore intelligible that personal faith should claim a personal destiny in that transcendent sphere where the Good comes to its full fruition. There is something contradictory in the thought that the self, whose spiritual vocation transcends the world, should itself be involved in the doom of all earthly things.

C.—The Temporal and the Transcendent World.

The direction of the religious consciousness is towards the supramundane, and its goal is in the transcendent world. This truth has been steadily accentuated throughout the present discussion of religion. But it seems advisable at this stage to add some words of explanation, and to bring out more fully the significance of this trend of the religious spirit.

The movement of the mind towards a world beyond remains undeveloped in primitive religion: the spirits which are the objects of early worship have their abode within the visible world. Yet they are not common objects of sense; for they lie behind the immediately given environment, neither visible nor tangible, and operating mysteriously. More remote are the gods of national religion. If they work within the world, yet their abode is in a region withdrawn from the haunts of men, and the souls of the departed are thought to dwell in a shadowy realm apart. With the advent of personal and universal religion the movement of the spiritual consciousness completes itself, and the transcendent nature of God and the supramundane destiny of man come clearly into view. God is above the world and man's ultimate goal is not in the world.

Now it may be said the idea of the transcendent is vague, and its significance should be better explained. The mere conception of transcendency would apply to things so far removed from each other as the Buddhist Nirvâna and the Christian Heaven. We agree it is not enough simply to say the transcendent is the negative of the mundane order. It is this, no doubt, but it must be something more, something positive, if it is to have a religious value. On the other hand, one has to bear in mind that, if the transcendent world could be fully rationalised and connected with the given world, it would cease to be transcendent: there would merely be the one system within which mundane and supramundane appeared as aspects of experience. Hence in a thoroughgoing monism the transcendent becomes immanent. Consequently, if we are to maintain the reality of the transcendent, from the theoretical standpoint there will always be a negative element in the idea. It denotes that which lies beyond the connected whole of mundane experience, and it cannot be construed in terms of that experience. Accordingly representations of the supramundane in terms of this world can never claim perfect truth: they can only be figurative and symbolical. And yet the transcendent, if it is to have a practical significance for human life, cannot stand in a purely negative relation to the world of experience. This fact is well brought out in the development of Kant's philosophy. In the Kantian system the negative relation of the noumenal to the phenomenal in the realm of theory is transformed into a positive and constructive relation in the realm of practice.

The need of this positive and practical relationship is fully revealed in the working of the religious mind. For religious faith the higher world which is its goal is never merely negative, merely future, merely beyond. The 'power of the world to come' is experienced here, shaping and directing man's spiritual endeavour. The transcendent realm is so thought in relation to temporal experience, that the soul finds there the fulfilment and completion of

its spiritual life. Though rational reflexion cannot demonstrate the continuity of the two spheres, faith postulates between them a continuity of value. The spiritual Good, discerned under conditions of sense and time, when its full meaning is realised becomes a transcendent Good, and the spiritual values we achieve here are maintained and come to their fruition hereafter. From one point of view it is not untrue to say that "the things not seen" are "a value superadded to the phenomenal world"; but it has to be kept in mind that this value can never be fully realised in the phenomenal world, and so points beyond it. Hence there is no discontinuity between the temporal and the transcendent Good; the two are related as the partial to the perfect, as the fragmentary to the complete; and here and now the soul has the foretaste of the final fulness. Not then by reason, but by a postulate of faith is the negative aspect of the transcendent transformed into a positive and practical relation; and this postulate expresses the demand of personal spirits that the values of the spiritual life shall come to their completion and fulfilment. This faith is non-rational if you please; but it is not irrational, for its postulates do not contradict the knowledge we possess. An act of faith, just because it is faith, cannot be fully rationalised: it is a free act of the spirit made vital by the spiritual experience out of which it issues.

On the grounds stated, the religious thinker cannot be expected to give a rational deduction of the transcendent world. But he may be asked to show why its existence is not incompatible with that order of experience with which we are familiar. And it would be a step in this direction, if he were able to make it plain that the present order of experience involves conditions which are not absolute, and therefore may conceivably be transcended. If we can do this, we shall do something to confirm the religious postulate.

The salient fact about the mundane order of experience is, that it is an order which is realised under spatial and

temporal conditions. And space and time, in the form of those all-inclusive wholes which conceptual thinking yields, cannot be taken for absolutely real. Were they so, we should be compelled to accept the reality of the infinitely extended and the infinitely little. But if space and time are not absolutely real, neither can it be said that they are subjective creations. Nor are they *a priori* forms of intuition, as Kant supposed. If the theory previously developed in these pages be right, the real basis on which the space-idea has been elaborated would be the co-existence of centres of experience within the common medium through which they interact. The time-idea, again, is evolved on the basis of the changing states of psychical experients. Both ideas, as they come to be developed by perceptual and conceptual processes, denote man's way of construing that order which lies behind the evolution of experience. There is this element of truth in the view of those who regard space and time as subjective: they depend for their present character on the particular way in which apprehending minds have learned to construe the data of experience. That this is not the only possible way, there are grounds for believing. Thus the mathematician can prove it is possible to develop with logical consistency the conception of a space different from the tri-dimensional space to which we are accustomed, although we cannot translate it into terms of sense-perception. Again, in the case of time, our outlook upon it depends on what has been called our 'time-span.' With man this is a matter of days and months and years: if the insect whose life is measured by a day had any conscious idea of time, its span would be vastly less: and to a being of a far higher order than man a thousand years might be 'as one day.' Despite such wide differences of practical attitude to time, there is nothing illusory in its nature; for it is *bene fundatum*, resting on the primary fact of change and its psychological counterpart, the experience of duration. But time, as we know and use the developed form, stands for the measure of our

practical activities; and this is what it means for us. The time-direction is determined for us by the teleological order in which we organise these activities. So the means precedes in time the end, and the end comes after the means and fulfils it. Conceptual time, which is a definite order running from the past through the present into the future, depends on the teleological or purposive organisation of practical life. To a being having only the psychical experience of duration, destitute of those 'forward-looking thoughts' which are the mark of self-conscious agents, the notion of time as an all-comprehensive order would be meaningless. Time is a legitimate interpretation of experience; but the meaning it has for us is bound up with the scope of our powers and our outlook, and its form is determined by the teleological organisation of our lives.

It is admissible to suppose, therefore, that, when the basis of personal life is transformed, and the soul passes into a higher stage of being, the existing time-divisions no longer count. Similarly the present divisions of space would lose their meaning. Such a form of existence may be fitly termed supramundane and supratemporal, because it transcends the earthly order in space and time. From the fact that it is transcendent we have no experience to guide us in framing a representation of this higher phase of existence: it must remain an object of faith, not of sight. This kind of inability is only what is to be expected, and there are analogies within the field of human experience. For instance, how little were men on the lowest levels of culture able to anticipate the form and content of civilised life! Again, how feebly can the child of tender years forecast the ideas and outlook of the mature mind! In these and other cases experience is the only sufficient instructor. And so nothing but experience can solve the problem of the nature of the transcendent life; at the lower stage no more than a dim presentiment of the higher is possible. But where the logical understanding can draw no cogent inferences, there is room for the spiritual venture of faith. This reference of religion

to a supramundane sphere supplies a test of spiritual character: this test would not exist if religion were no more than a system of reasoned truths.

We can therefore say little that is positive about the nature of the supramundane life. Yet there are certain ideas in regard to it which we may reject with some confidence. We shall do so on the strength of the postulate which demands a continuity between the lower and higher forms of existence. For it is one personal life at different stages of development, though the transition from one stage to the other means a transformation. If this be so, the supratemporal life cannot mean an absolutely changeless life. Such a destiny would do away with the conditions of personal consciousness, for there could be no consciousness apart from changing psychical states. So the supramundane or eternal state of being cannot signify a perfectly unchanging existence, if it is to be self-conscious and maintain a continuity of interest and value with the earthly existence. The transformation involved may be far-reaching, but it cannot be transformation into an absolutely fixed state, if the personal meaning and interest of the self are not to vanish away. Complete fixity is not compatible with life. In popular religion the word eternity is vaguely used; to many it seems to convey little more than the thought of everlastingness. Yet a transcendent existence must mean much more than mere extension in time. A life in which the aspiring soul comes to its fulfilment must possess something far more than quantitative endurance; for it is the quality, not the quantity, of life which counts. The idea of an eternal or supratemporal life ought rather to convey the thought of a living fulness of personal experience in which our present time-divisions have ceased to play a part. Even in our intenser experiences on earth the passing of time has little significance: *dem Glücklichen schlägt keine Stunde.* In the supramundane order of being the main thing is, that the fragmentary and broken character of our human experience has given place to an experience which is full

and satisfying, an experience which has risen superior to the lapse of time and all its painful uncertainties.

The temporal and the transcendent represent stages in the soul's progress. The value realised at the lower stage is conserved in the higher, for the self retains a continuity of meaning and interest notwithstanding the transformation it has undergone. The disintegration of the material body, on this view, is not a liberation from the limits of personality, but the way to the realisation of a higher form of personal life. Pure changelessness, we have seen, cannot be predicated of this life, and I think we may go a step further. It is difficult to suppose that any form of life, which remains that of a finite personal being, is a life which excludes all possibilities of further development. If our present desires are to weigh at all in this connexion, one would say that the transformation of all endeavour into complete satiety would be the negation rather than the realisation of our aspirations. "What men really want, when they want at all, is to be or do *more* of what they are or are doing," so it has been said.[1] On the other hand, it is plain that, if there is a supramundane development of personal spirits, it cannot be a mere repetition and prolongation of human striving. For the defects and obstacles which give form and character to earthly endeavour are linked to our material organism and its environment, and could not persist when these conditions were transformed. The thought of a higher order of development suggests itself, a development into which the old warfare with sin no longer enters and the spiritual powers have unimpeded exercise. Here there would be no bitterness of futile endeavour, and the good would have uninterrupted sway. But it is easy to speculate on this subject, though hard to speculate to profit. Confronted with this problem a religious genius like St. Paul was constrained to emphasise the fact that 'we know in part.' In similar circumstances Plato was wont to pass from lucid argument to myth or parable,

[1] R. L. Nettleship's *Philosophical Remains*, p. 9.

with a half ironical reference to the obscurity of the subject and the limitations of human powers. And after all, if we saw further and could prove more, faith would mean less.

D.—Revelation and Man's Religious Development.

On the question of the relation of God to man's religious development we have hitherto said little. But the matter is too important to be passed lightly over; and though the subject is perhaps not necessarily included in the present chapter, it has a relation to it and may appropriately enough form its close.

From the general phenomena of religious development some broad conclusions have been drawn. That development is broken in its course and partial in its movement, yet to the eye that surveys the whole, a general progress is visible. Spiritual and universal religion, as we find it in Christianity, is an immeasurable advance on the crude spiritism of the lowest culture. Religion shares in the general movement of progress, and influences and is influenced by the other elements of social life. More especially the growth of the ethical consciousness, which is the fruit of social advance, has powerfully contributed to the elevation and refinement of religion. The increasing energy of thought which comes of developing civilisation has reacted on religion, deepening its meaning by deepening man's knowledge of the universe and of himself; and even where old doctrines remain they are seen in a larger setting. In the spiritual as in the natural world there is nowhere perfect fixity. Religion, like a stream, has sometimes periods of swift advance; at other times it seems to become stagnant; and there are even points where it appears to bend backward on its course. Still when we trace the river over a wide space, we realise that at the end of the journey we have left the starting-point far behind. On the whole we can discern in the history of religion the gradual liberation of the human

mind from the bondage of materialism and an advance in spiritual ideas: in short, religious development reveals to us religion becoming increasingly inward and spiritual. The growth of the religious consciousness of humanity is a process of momentous significance: it means man's progress in the knowledge of himself, of the world, and of God. But this process, like other phases of spiritual development, cannot be adequately described in terms of organic growth; and there is a danger of introducing a false rigidity into our generalisations. The growth of an organism is uniform through all its parts: it moves altogether if it moves at all. But when we deal with spiritual development in society or the race, we are dealing with a movement which advances at very unequal rates within the complex social whole. If we were to use an image to illustrate our meaning, it would be that of a body of troops where those in the van are pushing rapidly forward, the centre is only moving slowly in the same direction, while the rear is lagging far behind or may have come to a standstill. Religious progress never affects all classes in a society equally, and ignorant superstition will be found alongside enlightened faith. It is not needful to amplify this statement, for the subject has been discussed in the earlier part of this volume; but the reader ought to keep the facts in mind when we are considering the relation of revelation to man's religious development.

Revelation we take to mean an apprehension of truth which rests, directly or indirectly, on the activity of God. All centres of experience constantly depend on the divine Ground of the world, and are sustained by the divine Will. But only by personal spirits can the divine working and leading be consciously apprehended. Hence the idea of revelation has a broader and a narrower meaning, as we see in the use of the phrases 'general revelation' and 'special revelation.' In the widest sense of the word the order of nature is a revelation, for it unfolds a meaning which has its ultimate source in God. In a higher, though still in a broad interpretation of the

word, the development of a moral order in human experience and the manifold expressions of the religious consciousness in history are revelations, for they rest on the living relation of the human mind to God, and apart from that relation they would not exist. In other words, the whole body of moral and religious phenomena is significant of a divine purpose which is being realised in humanity, and through these experiences man is fulfilling his divinely appointed destiny. In this acceptation of the word the lowest as well as the highest religion would fall within the scope of the principle of revelation, for every religion, whatever its content, would have a place and meaning in the divine world-plan. No form of religion is wholly devoid of spiritual significance. Even the rude worship of the fetish or the totem is not a meaningless aberration of the human mind left to its own devices. In these lowly forms men were unconsciously expressing an impulse latent within them which had its final source in a Power above themselves.

The question, however, has still to be put, whether, within the development of religion, it is not possible to trace a more direct working of the divine Spirit leading to the apprehension of spiritual truth. To express it otherwise: Can the claim to specific or special revelation, over and above the general revelation of which we have been speaking, be maintained? In a pantheistic system this question would not arise, for the God of pantheism is a purely immanent Power, everywhere present and ever active, yet at no point definitely intervening and influencing the course of evolution. To put it bluntly, God on this theory is always doing all he can. The case is different with the transcendent, yet also immanent, God of theistic religion. Here at least the way is open for us to infer a specific revealing activity of God within the development of religious experience, if the facts seem to call for it. But a difficulty presents itself. How are we to distinguish an act of special revelation on God's part from that general revelation which is contained in the

development of spiritual experience? Plainly something more than the individual claim to be inspired is necessary; otherwise the 'frenzy' of the savage sorcerer might rank for a revelation with the 'message' of the prophet of righteousness. A special revelation, it may be said, will possess an *authoritative* character. But we must have some test of what is authoritative if the problem is to be brought any nearer to a solution. Needless to say, on this subject there has been a vast amount of strife and division, and the modern mind is becoming less and less inclined to accept a doctrine as 'revealed' because it is taught by a church or contained in a sacred book. Some further explanation is demanded.

In the notion of 'revealed' as opposed to 'natural' knowledge there is usually conveyed the thought of a communication of truth to which man could not attain by his own unaided powers. That is to say, a knowledge is communicated by God to man which man otherwise could not have possessed. The older theological conception was, that religious doctrines were imparted in this supernatural fashion. In this form, however, the idea is no longer tenable, and it was the offspring of an age when the psychological nature and the historical development of religion were little understood. Religious doctrines as such are not imparted to the mind from without: they bear on their face the evidence of human thought working on the matter of religious experience, and influenced by various motives, notably by motives springing from the social and intellectual environment. What is primary is the spiritual experience out of which the doctrines arise and which they claim to interpret. Direct revelation can only be asserted of a religious experience: the doctrine is a derivative, and sometimes an imperfect, statement of what the experience means. In offering some further remarks on this subject of 'special revelation,' I wish to suggest rather than to dogmatise.

Special revelation must first and foremost be a personal and inward spiritual experience. A sacred writing

or a religious institution can only be 'revealed' in the secondary sense, that it has arisen out of inspired experiences of human souls. It will therefore be in the domain of spiritual and personal religion, if anywhere, that these revealing experiences will be most surely discerned. The phenomena of dream and vision, which stand for specific revelation in the earlier stages of religion, have not an intrinsic character that would establish such a claim; and the value we set on them will depend on their developmental relation to the central purpose of religion and the higher religious experiences. How then are we to decide when these higher spiritual experiences may rightfully rank as special revelations? The historic student, be it remembered, stands in no direct and immediate relation to these inner processes, and he cannot reproduce them in himself and say they mean for him just what they meant for those who originally experienced them. In the circumstances it does not seem possible to reach a decision which is more than a private feeling, unless you can go beyond the particular experience and test the content of truth which it claims in some larger way. We shall be helped in this task if we keep in view the central end or good after which the spiritual consciousness strives, and towards which religious development moves. That good is a divine and transcendent Good through which all temporal goods reach their fulfilment and consummation. Now it is not a feature of religious development to be a constant and consistent movement to this goal. For all spiritual development involves the factor of human freedom, and man oftentimes fails in his vocation and wilfully seeks his good where it is not to be found. Hence the disappointments and disillusionments which mark man's spiritual pilgrimage; hence also the spectacle of faiths decaying which once were quick and growing. Within the general revelation contained in religious experience there is room, then, for the idea of a directive influence of God, working in a special way at special times, an influence definitely exerted to keep the

line of man's spiritual development towards its transcendent goal and to quicken in souls the consciousness of their spiritual destiny. This special revelation differs in degree rather than in kind from the general revelation contained in the moral order and in religious experience. It denotes a more intense and specifically purposive working of God on the human soul. Such higher revelations have been variously experienced by different individuals in different ages. The divine fire burned and men spoke with their tongue in the language of their time. These special revelations always signify new and fruitful apprehensions of divine truth on the part of man. The inspired word thus spoken to a people takes a far wider significance; it becomes a guiding light in the spiritual development of man. So if man seeks God, God in turn directs man to the fulfilment of his spiritual destiny. God guiding religious development from within through the revealing experiences of his servants,—this is special revelation, and it is a factor in the providential order of the world.

From its nature special revelation is not a collective experience; it is the experience of the few who are qualified to be the media of divine influence. The springs of social progress lie, not in the average multitude, but in those outstanding figures who see further and feel deeper than common men. Nor is it different with religious development. The mountain peak first catches the light of the rising sun; and so it is the prophet, standing high above the crowd of men, who receives the revealing light of God and then reflects it to the many. The prophet and spiritual leader become the organs of higher revelation, communicating their own vision of divine truth to the society around them. When the religious life has grown stagnant and worship has become mechanical, when human hearts led captive by the desire of this world have forgotten the heavenly goal, through these elect souls the divine quickening comes and men are braced for the fulfilment of their divine vocation. The great crises and the far-reaching new movements of man's spiritual development

have had their temporal origin in these revealing experiences. In this way the religious life of society has time and again been delivered from the bondage of the world and directed anew to the transcendent Good. So, despite human failure and error, the true ideal of the spirit victoriously asserts itself. The name special revelation may fitly be applied to such illuminating experiences in the soul of man, experiences which have initiated new spiritual movements, and have given men a deeper sense of what religion means and of the goal to which it leads. Here, if anywhere, within the great and complex movement of religion a specific directing activity of God is apparent. But while religious philosophy may thus find a place and meaning for the idea of special revelation, it cannot be expected to give a detailed judgment on its historic claims. Some means of testing these claims to revealed truth will be found in the manner in which they maintain and justify themselves in the course of religious development. What truly reveals God will have a revealing value for souls: if the light is divine, it will be the light of life. Applying this test, we may surely say that the ethical message of the Hebrew prophets, and the words of Christ in a unique degree, are 'special revelations.'

It now only remains to gather up in a few concluding remarks some reflexions suggested by our survey of the nature, development, and truth of religion. No one can study the phenomena of religion without being deeply impressed by their significance. In religion as nowhere else, is to be found the key to the meaning of life. Though the importance of religion may often be obscured for individuals, or even for the men of an age, it never fails to reassert its power. Exclusive devotion to secular objects and interests always ends in disappointment and disillusionment, and an era of scepticism closes with a return to faith. The persistence of religion through all the changes of human society is a token that it is deep-rooted in the perennial needs of the soul.

Man comes into being within a world divinely ordered, a world whose interacting elements are created and sustained by God. The intrinsic relation of man's spirit to God on the one hand, and its own incompleteness on the other, serve to explain the genesis and growth of religion. This incompleteness has two aspects: men need their fellow-men and they need God for their self-fulfilment: so the religious bond links them to one another and to a Power above them. Hence religion is both an organised, collective service and an inward individual experience, and these objective and subjective factors act and react on one another. The objective order makes for continuity, and the inward experience for progress. Religion evolves as an aspect of the larger whole of culture, and in its development it influences and is influenced by other aspects of culture. From the limitations, outward and inward, to which man's nature is subject, there issues the endless procession of his needs and desires. These are slowly purified and elevated with the evolution of social life; and the growth of religion is just man's deepening consciousness of the meaning and fulfilment of his religious need. The broad trend of this development is from the sensuous to the spiritual, from outward to inward, from a mundane to a supramundane goal. From the beginning the object of man's worship lies beyond the immediate and visible environment, and is reached by an exercise of faith in some form. This movement of faith, impelled by the deepening need of the soul, gradually rises beyond the world of sense, till it finds in a transcendent God the true object of human worship, and in a transcendent world the true destiny of man. In this process faith makes full use of imaginative thinking and draws freely on human analogies; and this renders necessary a philosophical criticism of the forms of religious representation. But so-called anthropomorphism can never be entirely eliminated, and is so far justified by the spiritual affinity of man and God. With the growth of religious thought the grosser images of sense, through which man has striven to depict

the things of the spirit, are gradually cleared away, and the misleading figure is transformed into the symbol. In this way the mode of representation may grow old and perish, while the spiritual value is conserved.

The central problem raised by the question of truth in religion is the problem of the validity of the idea of God. A strict proof of the existence of God we found impossible. But in trying to make our experience coherent we were led to conclude that a twofold postulate was necessary: an ultimate Ground of the world and an ultimate Value. These postulates were fulfilled in the conception of an ethical and personal God, whose will brought into being and sustains the whole system of individual existences, and who is himself the final Good of personal spirits. And this thought of a transcendent Good and a transcendent Destiny sheds a helpful light on the perplexing ethical problems of man's earthly experience.

Looking backward on the long course of religious experience, we see how significant a development it is. The whole Godward movement of the human spirit is unintelligible, if man's origin and destiny lie wholly within the present world-order. If this upward aspiration of mankind is directed to an illusory Object, our faith in human nature would be shaken and our confidence in spiritual experience would be broken. Were man so profoundly mistaken in his deepest interests, a scepticism extending to all human values would inevitably follow. A few perhaps would not shrink from this depressing conclusion; yet though faith in God is not always easy, it offers far fewer difficulties than blank scepticism. The theist has a sane and robust faith in human nature. He sees in the evolution of religion man gradually becoming conscious of his own meaning and of the goal to which his spiritual experience points. Man had to traverse a long and painful way—how long we are only now beginning to realise—from a life of brutish ignorance swayed by animal instincts to a fully articulated, rational self-consciousness governed by ideals. Still in the end he has emerged on

the heights, and looks forward to a destiny beyond the world. One can hardly doubt that, in the religious self-consciousness of man, we read the true significance of the earthly order in which he plays a part. The mundane system is not an end in itself: it is a basis for the development of life, and life has its goal in spiritual personality. The 'expectation of the creature' points to the 'manifestation of the sons of God.' The final significance of spiritual life is revealed in its movement to the transcendent Good. With Plato we may call this movement "an uplifting of what is best in the soul to the vision of what is best in reality."

In these pages we have time and again combated the idea that religious development was a necessary process, the manifestation of an inflexible law. Spiritual progress is rooted in human freedom; it is therefore a task which man must take upon himself, a vocation which he ought to fulfil. Hence for finite spirits who come upon this earthly stage, and in a little while pass from it, life furnishes a far-reaching test—the test whether they will realise their vocation or will dissipate their powers among temporal interests that are doomed to vanish. What the significance of man's spiritual development is for God we can but dimly apprehend. The idea in which we find most satisfaction is that of an education and discipline of finite spirits by God for fellowship with himself. Men in seeking God, if haply they may find him, are themselves being sought of God. In his *Timæus*, Plato throws out a profound and suggestive thought. The Creator, he says, was good and free of all jealousy, and he desired that all things should be as like himself as they could be.[1] Further developing this thought, we may say that God, through the religious experience, is educating souls and drawing them upward into a divine communion. This is the truth which is expressed in the great Christian doctrine of a God of Love, who is seeking to redeem men from the dominion of the evil, and to lift them into the fulness of eternal life.

[1] 29 E.

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